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ALBERT MARQUET,
Courtesy Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., New York

A CULTURAL EVALUATION OF SUBJECTIVISM IN CONTEMPORARY PAINTING

Paul M. Laporte

REALISTIC painting and the photographic camera. It has generally been recognized that there exists a marked similarity in both spatial organization and visual effects between "realistic" painting and photography. This so-called realistic painting developed first in the fifteenth century, and then remained influential to a greater or lesser degree up to and through most of the nineteenth century. The widely spread notions of philosophical empiricisms had led to the belief that painting was a reflection of the "objective" world. For this very reason, painting from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century was considered as being more "realistic," more "objective," and more "scientific" than it had ever been before. The photographic image was taken as proof of the "scientific correctness" of painting.

This interpretation seems to be reversing the original relationship between painting and photography. The concept and practice of realistic painting was based on the following conditions: observer and object in a completely static and rigid relationship to each other; reference of all shapes and their spatial relationships within the picture field to one or two points "in the distance" (vanishing points); increasing elimination of line as the two-dimensional expression of tactile experience, and its substitution by (quantitative) light-dark relationships. All of these conditions are basic also in the physical operation of the photographic camera. Photography eliminates the natural movement of observer and object; with the help of the focusing lens, it renders perspective in the same manner as does realistic painting; and it transfers to the image the phenomenal appearance of the subject matter by way of varying quantities of light impressing themselves on sensitized plates or films. Granted that this manner of interpreting the apparent characteristics of the environment was operative in painting long before the invention of the photographic camera, one should conclude that the camera is but a mechanized version of the basic concepts of seeing prevalent in the painting of this period. This description demonstrates that realistic painting had surrendered some of its prerogatives as an art to the "scientific" point of view of the period, which was of a highly mechanical and quantitative nature.

If painting as a way of dealing with the qualitative rather than the quantitative aspects of space has at all survived the scientific age, it did so in spite of this heavy tax on its intrinsic values. Witness the constantly increasing subjectivism and romanticism of this period, which became more and more dependent on great individuals while a steadily increasing amount of "below standard" art was produced. Concern with the purely optical and mechanical aspects of seeing was generally in the ascendance, while the subjective mental processes of visualization became the prerogative of fewer and fewer individuals. In order to counteract this mechanization of vision increasing stress was placed on merely psychological innovations, that is on narrative or on obviously transitory visual phenomena such as night pictures, sunsets, etc.

2. *The selectiveness of the photographic observer—object relationship.* It is not difficult to show that both realistic painting and photography are as *selective* in their approach to the practically infinite potentialities of seeing as any other type of approach, mechanical or artistic. The most basic arbitrariness of the photographic observer-object relationship is the exclusion of the motive or kinesthetic quality of vision. This means not only that in ordinary perception vision without eye movement is practically impossible, but also that movement of the head and even of the whole body is most natural when an object or a scene are investigated. "Mobility," says Huxley (5), "is the normal and natural condition of the selecting and perceiving mind; and, because of the need for central fixation, mobility is also the normal and natural condition of the sensing eye."¹

The second arbitrariness of the "photographic" relationship between the recording subject and the "object" to be recorded is that animated objects are hardly ever found without motion, and that the lack of movement even in inanimate objects is only relative. Not only does the light constantly change by the grace of which objects can be seen, but all objects are also engaged in a constant even if ever so slow process of change, be it growth or decay. Nor were all of these factors unknown to realistic painting. But they were considered of little importance in comparison with the attempt of this period to "immortalize the moment." It may be said, therefore, that both realistic painting and photography exercise their selectiveness among the infinite possibilities of perception by the exclusion of subjective and objective movement. Kinesthetic, that is dynamic perception, on the other hand, is the choice of contemporary painting. It is for this type of dynamic experience that contem-

¹ Tactile perception and its role in the interpretation of visual sensations is left out of this discussion in order to keep it on as uncomplicated a level as possible.

porary painting tries to find an adequate symbolic expression. And it should be born in mind that this dynamic experience has its ground in physiological as well as in psychological conditions.

Another factor of the difference between the photographic and the "actual" observer-object relationship, namely binocular vision, cannot be discussed without considering the physiological and anatomical aspects of perception. We enter here the realm of extremely fine differentiation. "Of all the muscles in the body," says Kahn (6), "the muscles which move the eyes are outstanding for the accuracy of their responses and the precision of their movements. . . . Next to the muscles of the larynx, the ocular muscles are the most delicate in the body." Some aspects of binocular vision were not only known but also practiced by realistic painting; others were either known and dismissed, or completely unknown to it. This paper will attempt to show that these neglected aspects of perception were decidedly contributing to the momentous changes which painting underwent since the end of the last century. They are probably not the cause of these changes, but they offer some justification for them and, above all, they go far to show that modern painting draws much more heavily on perception than seems to be the case at first glance. These considerations may help to dispel the misconception that painting today depends more upon "imagination" than it did in the realistic period. Art, today as always, needs and uses perceptive equivalents to realize the "image" which is and always was, an abstraction.

The physiological factor of the two different retinal pictures of the eyes is taken care of in the brain, their unification is a function of the "mind." Unification depends at least partly on *learning* how to deal with the duplicity of the received images. If we assume, as we were wont to, that they are "practically identical", we will learn to see them identical, and to dismiss as not pertinent most or all perceptions which contradict this assumption.² If we accept their relative non-identity the principles of their unification will have to be of a different nature. A series of pictures in *Kahn's Man in Structure*

² Most of the literature of the Hanover Institute came to my attention after this paper was practically finished. I believed it to be advantageous, however, to retain most of my original terminology even though adoption of their terminology would not only have added precision, but would have helped greatly in clarifying certain implications of my thesis. For those not familiar with the literature of the Hanover Institute my original terminology might prove useful in making the transition to Ames's interpretation of the processes involved in perception.

The role of our assumptions (or "presumptions") in giving meaning and significance to "impingements" and thereby making "perception" possible, is clearly stated by Ames in various places. (4-a) These assumptions are based on past experiences.

and Function (6) illustrates this point very graphically. One figure illustrates how we "think" we see, others illustrate how we do see in day-time and at night, with one eye, with two eyes separate, and in actual binocular vision. The last picture comes very close in principle to certain forms of presentation used in Cubism.

While for the camera it is possibly only at the expense of long exposure time to sharp-focus simultaneously very close and very distant objects, and while this is entirely impossible for the human eye, the image received from a very close object in binocular vision plainly cannot be reproduced in the traditional manner. Connected with this factor is the variability of the field of vision which in the human eye as well as in the camera depends upon the curvature of the lense or, with other words, on its focal length. This variability of the field of vision is still more increased in human *binocular* vision because it is, in addition, dependent upon the varying distance of the eyes from each other.³

3. *Anatomical and physiological conditions of human vision.* Characteristically, there are hardly any statistics available which would illustrate the range of variability existing among individuals in terms of the anatomy and physiology of the eye. A few general remarks and data will therefore have to suffice. Sheldon (13) remarks that "the ways in which two bodies may differ are endless." This is obviously also true of the human eye and all its functions. From his absolutely unique visual experiences—which must at least partly be conditioned by his absolutely unique physical equipment—the individual selects those aspects which will give to these experiences structure and meaning. This selective process is of a psychological nature, and depends on the cultural background and on the specific purposes of the individual. An artist may select those aspects which already have acquired cultural meaning. He will be sincere as long as he uses *his own* visual material for the realization of this accepted cultural meaning; he will be insincere if he utilizes the visual material of other artists without finding it in his own experience. Or else, an artist may try to give meaning to visual experiences which up to this time have not yet found a place in a culturally accepted structure. This is, of course, the role of the artist today, and this is the way our culture *expects* the artist to behave. As Sheldon says: "The aim is to develop every individual

³ In photography a variety of lenses has been created which in conjunction with the variety of film sizes makes it possible to take a number of pictures from the same point, each of which would not only be different in the size of the picture field and in the distance that can at best be sharp-focused, but in its very perspective.

according to the best potentialities of his own nature, while protecting him from the fatal frustration of a false *persona* and false ambitions."

The following factors are important in the anatomical and physiological differences among individuals: the measurements of the eyeball, the extreme deviations of which from the "normal" are called *myopia*, *hyperopia*, *presbyopia*, *astigmatism*, and *aniseikonia*. "About ninety percent of all human beings have a slight 'normal' or, as it is called physiological astigmatism," says Kahn. The distance of the two eyes from each other is another important factor, and so is the condition of the refractory media of the eye. Lythgoe (11) says of the pupil diameter that its variations "among different subjects is very marked." And he goes on to say: "Even when external conditions are kept as constant as possible, the mean diameter varies from day to day." According to this source, the mean variation for one subject is about ten percent, but "changes of considerably more than this must be occurring constantly. The variations in the brightness of the retinal image must be proportionally large."—No comparative data are available for the relative areas of both the *fovea centralis* and the *macula lutea*, nor for the relative distribution of cones and rods. While this list is by far not exhaustive, it indicates some of the major areas in which variations are important. If we add to it differences in strength, velocity and direction of the eye muscles as well as varying personal and cultural habits of mind-body coordination, it is easy to see how all these infinitesimal deviations from the "norm" will accumulate very fast. If we then expect, as we can, that no two individuals are identical in the anatomical and physiological equipment of their eyes, the merely physical differences in what their eyes represent to them as "visual raw material"—Ame's "impingement"—must be very great indeed.

4. *The variability of vision.* An instructive series of examples of variability of vision achieved by artificially induced differences between the vision of the two eyes may be found in Adelbert Ames's (1) experiments with so-called aniseiconic or size lenses. These lenses are constructed in such a manner that in each eye a differently sized image is produced. They are, furthermore, applied in various combinations on each side of the glasses worn by the observers in the experiments. Resulting therefrom are all kinds of striking "distortions" as slanting or curved walls, changes in apparent distances and sizes of objects, asymmetric shifting of shapes, and many other interesting phenomena. "There is apparently an infinity of anomalous appearances," says Ames, "that can be experienced when the relationship between the stimulus patterns received by the two eyes is altered in different ways by all the various different types of size lenses." While these variations are arrived at by the artificial

means of lenses and hence highly exaggerated, it may be assumed that, to a greater or lesser degree, they are operative in most human beings.

Another very important contribution to this problem has recently been made by R. K. Luneburg (10). This author takes as his starting point another aspect of the wide range of experiments developed at the Hanover Institute. He attempts to find a metric for what he calls "visual space" in contrast to the "physical space" of science. According to his theory, visual space has as one of its conditions certain basic aspects of vision, i.e. binocularity as well as the movement of the eyes and the head. In his search for a geometry which would satisfy the conditions of both visual and physical space he arrives at the conclusion that this geometry is non-Euclidean. This result may also be formulated in the following way: the projective perspective of realistic painting is Euclidean, and hence does not satisfy the obvious factors of binocular vision, and of the mobility of the visual process. Visual and physical perception of our external environment are contradictory to each other if the physical perception is conceived as Euclidean.

The most important contribution of Luneburg's work to the problem of individual differences in vision is in terms of his remark that any specific application of his theory "requires the knowledge of the constants σ and μ . These constants are probably quite different for different observers and even for the same observer at different periods of his life." A survey of a great number of persons with respect to the constants σ and μ "will give us information about the question whether or not there exist significant personal differences in the relation of physical and visual perception." Luneburg, in conclusion considers it possible in principle that, depending on the individual measurements of σ and μ , there may be observers whose visual space is Euclidean, and others whose visual space is non-Euclidean, i.e. either hyperbolic or elliptic.⁴

⁴ While this was written I tried to find out what the significance of these constants was. Mr. Luneburg had died, and Mr. Ames was kind enough to give the following explanation. In a letter to me of February 28, 1950 he writes:

"You are quite correct in recognizing the significance of Luneburg's contribution in analytically proving that two personal factors represented by the symbols σ and μ have to be taken into account in binocular vision. Just what the nature of these constants is has not been definitely determined. However, we are sure that they are psychological rather than anatomical or physiological. And we have considerable empirical evidence to warrant our believing that they involve the observer's assumptions derived from past experiences as to the curvature and orientation of binocularly seen surfaces."

According to my present understanding of Mr. Ames's theories I still cannot see why the possibility of these constants being in some way connected with anatomical and physiological measurements must be excluded.

If these assumptions will be found to be correct, as undoubtedly they will, the cultural implications are quite obvious. Realistic painting favored a generally Euclidean representation of space, and hence must have favored individuals with Euclidean space perception. The bias of contemporary painting for non-Euclidean space is obvious. More specifically, the Theory of Relativity enters here as a potent cultural factor (8). If physical reality is taken as a series of *events*, i.e. if its four-dimensional time-space character is taken into consideration, its metric is hyperbolic. "Physical observation leads to a hyperbolic metric if discussed from a relativistic point of view." (10) This, then, is the same metric which applies also to at least one group of observers with a particular range of measurements of σ and μ .

5. *Normal and average vision.* The problem of cultural evaluation, as far as Cubistic, non-Euclidean space representation is concerned, would present itself approximately in the following manner. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, for which reasons whatsoever, Euclidean space representation as a culturally binding factor was rapidly losing hold. Simultaneously the artist's cultural freedom to investigate highly subjective and personal experiences of space was rapidly increasing. Artistic experimentation in presenting highly subjective space experiences gets under way, and it is still going on today. In this process of investigation one group, the Cubists, hits on a form of space representation which turns out to have a common denominator with one of the greatest revolutions in the realm of science: the Theory of Relativity. The survival value of the cubist mode, it seems to me, is based on this very factor. Any type of approach in one field, in order to become a cultural value, must not only be structurally consistent in itself, but must also bear structural resemblance to at least a limited number of other fields of human endeavor contemporary with it.

Realistic painting has usually been defended on the ground that it is concerned with the visual presentation of nature as we "normally" see it. This "normalcy" cannot any longer be defended on a purely physiological basis.⁵ But there is certainly a cultural "norm" or value to which it can and must be linked. In realistic painting the "norm" means the analytic use both of geometrically measurable shapes as they appear when seen in reference to one point in space, and of measurable quantities of light as reflected from "objects." The relationship of individual vision to this culturally pre-established

⁵ If, as Ames maintains, *all* significance and meaning in perception is based on past experience, then there exists not even any longer a problem (a "hitch") because by definition there cannot be any "normal" perception as distinct from "abnormal" perception.

scheme of vision may be likened to that between the handwriting of the individual and the standardized script as taught in the schools. Individual deviations from the standard are tolerable only to the degree to which the legibility of the accepted symbols is not impaired. The quantitative interpretation of perception in realistic painting is in keeping with the quantitative aspect of the sciences as developed since the renaissance. Geometrical measurements are made by the *standardized* length of a part of the human body (e.g. the "foot") just as the references of the realistic picture are to the standardized ("ideal" or "average") human eye. *Realistic "normalcy" of vision can be maintained only by exclusion of various vital factors from the process of perception.*

Individualistic variations were, of course, not completely absent in this period. Individualistic variability, or subjectivism in realistic painting from 1400—1900 advanced on two fronts: in the realm of physiognomic, and increasingly also of psychological realism pertaining to the subject matter (e.g. fifteenth and seventeenth century portraiture); and in the realm of an increasing subjectivism (romanticism) which allowed for a certain amount of variability in the perceptual elements used for the realization of the picture (e.g. suggestive preferences for certain configurations of line, for instance Rubens's curves; for a certain pattern of chiaroscuro as that of Rembrandt; or for certain combinations and qualities of color as in impressionism). But all the while certain fundamentals in perception were binding to all artists, fundamentals which had no reference to the variability of perception among different individuals, but only to an agreed upon "average eye," that is to the culturally preconceived scheme of visualization or, as it also may be called, the artistic idiom of the period.

This artistic idiom entailed a kind of hierarchy among the formal elements of painting. Shape or form was most objective *because* measurable, i.e. vision could be checked by the sense of touch. Light was less objective because it allowed for no check by the sense of touch; even scientific concern with the nature of light did not start before the seventeenth century. Color was most subjective because its intrinsic nature was not understood at all; it was only in the nineteenth century that science began to understand color as a quality of light. Individual variability in painting was therefore allowed only to the degree that measurement was not available for a particular aspect of visual perception. It is interesting to note that the moment color was understood by science as a function of light (which happened at the time impressionism came into being) the whole concept of normal or average vision in art collapsed. A whole cycle of objectivation had run its course, and a new evaluation of the subjective components in perception was needed.

Consideration of the terms *average* and *normal* should help to clarify some aspects of this argument. The *average* is clearly a statistical term with all its advantages and disadvantages of fast but inexact communication. Never should an actual event or object be compared with the average except for the purpose of stating *which* average characteristics are present in it. The *normal* is a much more comprehensive term, and it is clearly the functional consideration of its specific effects in a given society which determines what is to be considered as normal. Any kind of behavior or evaluation may be normal in one society and abnormal in another. Normal and average are not interchangeable because many types of behavior may still be found in the realm of the normal of a given society, which are not at all or only to a very small degree present in the numerical average of its population. The interchanging use of the two terms contributed a great deal to the confusion in various fields of research. The confusion of the normal with the average is one of the basic factors which now keep so many people from considering contemporary art from an enlightening point of view.

Owing to its highly quantitative approach, the scientific age (realistic painting since the sixteenth century) equated the average with the norm. The majority assumption today is that the average *is* the norm. But in all fields of research it becomes increasingly clear that this assumption is wrong. The most pertinent discoveries for our particular problems were made by anthropology, witness for instance the different role played by artists in different societies. (14).

6. *The cultural concept of non-conformity.* What before the twentieth century was unquestioningly taken as the "objective" or "normal" expression of the physiology and psychology of perception turns out to be an average based upon complete oversight of both the dynamic *process* of vision, and the *variability* among individuals. What gave the common visual denominator to realistic painting was a system of recording which by no means took into consideration all the factors of sight; derived from a scientific construct, it was not oblivious of certain basic aspects of the processes of vision, but it interpreted these processes in a specific manner which became culturally binding to all the members of a particular cultural group. The assumed "objectivity" of the realistic approach has been exploded in our century both by the practice of art and the theory of science. But it still has not been recognized as what it really is: a plainly cultural concept.

One important aspect of a given "normal" person is his nonconformity with the statistical average. Any perusal of a work in the field of constitutional analysis or of constitutional psychology will make this perfectly clear. (13). In the realistic and scientific period from 1400-1900 the quantitative

approach to the world was the cultural ideal, and hence there existed no reason for a sharp distinction between the norm and the average. Since, however, all scientific measurements have been recognized as being relative to some pre-established frame of reference we have entered into an increasingly qualitative approach (2). The binding factor in contemporary culture is no longer directed toward the "normal," meaning the average, but very pointedly toward the maximum of individual variation, the specific and unique quality of the individual. As Sheldon points out, the problem for science is to establish a "meaningful" frame of reference; that means that the frame of reference is to have a qualitative connotation, even though its measurements are still quantitative.

We tried to show that the subject matter or "raw material" of art is primarily a cultural one not only in terms of content, but also in terms of the preferred or favored modes of visualization (i.e. perception). If, since the fifteenth century, we find increasing variability in individual expression (aside from the differences in "ability" which always existed), this is a cultural trend which culminated in the early twentieth century. But up to this climax the variety of individual expression was always achieved in spite of the underlying cultural factor of "normal" or average vision. Up to the late nineteenth century individual differences were of a merely subjective or emotional nature. They were either tolerated as a necessary consequence of the natural imperfection of man, or hailed as a true expression of his creative genius. In the first case it was the academic average which prevailed, in the latter case the "mystery" of the lonely and completely intuitive genius.

Today, we find ourselves in a new cultural situation. The artist is no longer exhorted to verify the norm in terms of the average, or to assert the mystery of his differences, but rather to *demonstrate variability in terms of normal differences. Difference has become a cultural subject matter.* This should be so because our very survival depends on this change. Only if society as a whole accepts this new evaluation will it be possible to make the adjustments necessary to meet the conditions of our age.

Our problem can now be described in the following manner. Perception is a very complex, vital "transaction" with a great number of aspects "but for" which there would be no perception. It takes place in the "four-dimensional" world of events, and the simple linear observer-object relationship of the preceding realistic period cannot even begin to disclose its characteristics. Three of these "but for" conditions are of particular significance for our problem: 1) the physiological patterns or hieroglyphics of the mechanics of seeing; 2) the "assumptive world" of the observer, and 3) his attitude or purpose. (4-b)

"Physiological patterns. . . are the observable characteristics of the initial stages of receptor-excitation. . . . These patterns are the merest rudimentary clues to perception. Initially they are relatively meaningless hieroglyphics which acquire significance only through interpretation." Indeterminate as this receptor-excitation may be, it is at least partially determined by the particular anatomical and physiological conditions of the receptor. This means that receptor-excitations are unique not only in terms of the uniqueness of the experience connected with them, but also in terms of their own purely physical characteristics.

"Assumptions underlie many if not all perceptions. . . . Judgments of position and distance . . . are based on assumptions." In an other context Ames (2) has characterized all assumptions, conscious and unconscious, as emerging from the "Form World," which "has its origin in prior experience and at least to some extent is modified by every new experience. . . . The successfulness of action . . . depends upon the prognostic reliability of the perception which in turn depends upon the nature of particular 'tentative assumptions' of the Form World." Applied to the problem at hand this means that the assumptive world characterized by quantitative science and realistic painting apparently guarantees a sufficient degree of success in everyday action. But this is in no way proof of its absolute correctness, nor does it exclude the possibility of other "assumptive worlds" with an equal expectancy of success in action.

Further investigation in this direction will have to be made. Yet even on the scarce evidence now available it may be said that, however unique each individual's form world may be, it contains at least a great amount of "cultural assumptions." This is confirmed by Ames when he characterizes it as "potentially common and universal". The relation between the individual "assumptive world" and culture may be similar to that between the biological individual and the human race. In his discussion of Schroedinger's "What is Life" Ames says that "a most important part, if not the most important part of our physiology is not of our lives but is of the past ages, and to that extent we are of the past ages as well as of our own time." (4-b, p.6) This may be paraphrased by saying that a most important part, if not the most important part of our psychology is not of our lives but is of the past ages—in terms of the culture which was instrumental in conditioning it. *The individual uniqueness of our assumptive world is determined by that selection from the assumptions made available to us by culture, which we happened to make, for whatever reasons and by whichever causes.*

Attitude or purpose as one of the "but fors" of perception is, of course, very closely related to the "assumptive world." It is the "selective factor . . .

which with the same hieroglyphics creates for one individual a perception quite different from that of some other individual. . . . A knowledge of how attitudes operate is . . . the beginning of the *study of values*. From conflicting hieroglyphics attitudes select those which are in line with the needs and interest of the individuals." Consequently we may say that art is, among other things, a human "institution," and as such favors certain attitudes and purposes in those individuals who work to make a contribution in the field of art. The artist, therefore, in dealing as artist with his impingements, makes certain assumptions which are of a cultural nature. By the exercise of free choice, his assumptions become instrumental in the determination of the qualities of his perception.

When the artist's perceptions emerge, the assumptions and purposes contributing to their determination are not only conditioned by his assumptive world in general, but also by the particular assumptions connected with him as artist qua artist. These latter assumptions, as all others, are at least to a great extent culturally determined. They may direct him to be as "objective" as possible, that is to try to exclude as much as possible those aspects of his impingements which are different from other people's impingements. This is the case of the "classic" artist. Secondly, the artist's assumptions may direct him to maintain a generally "objective" frame work while at the same time trying to fill it out with as many of his unique experiences as this frame will carry. This is the case of the "romantic" artist of the baroque. Or, finally, the artist's assumptions may direct him to shift the "objective" frame of reference to the common and universal factor of the difference among, and the uniqueness of individual receptor-excitations. This seems to be to an increasing degree the case of the contemporary artist. It is very likely that what Ames calls "form-permanence" is connected with these cultural directives, and that one of the vital functions of art is to demonstrate form-permanence, and to keep it constantly before the eyes of a cultural group.

I have deliberately chosen the obviously minor problem of the anatomical and physiological differences among individuals as the basis for this discussion. In this way we can, I hope, arrive at a more precise understanding of the situation without being lost in its complexity. I do not believe that the particular formulation of the problem attempted here answers all the questions, but it does keep on safe ground by connecting a cultural and psychological problem with a physiological one. As yet we know very little about the forces that determine, psychologically and physiologically, the uniqueness of the "person." But we can say that the contemporary artist seems to have a cultural directive which induces him to exploit his unique physiological

conditions for the sake of a cultural purpose. Definitely there is a danger of his falling into the trap of the completely personal and hence "unintelligible." However, there is, on the other hand, the great potential value of making available to other members of society his unique experiences. One can hardly overestimate the broad scope of the contemporary attempt to expand individual experience by making it possible for the appreciator of art to share not only what humans have "objectively" in common, but also that by which they differ. This is the exact reversal of what existed before: in the later periods of realistic painting there was the danger of complete superficiality in the unquestioning dependence upon what had already been established as common "objective" ground. Only the very greatest artists could escape this predicament.

Our problem can now be formulated in the following way. While, with an increasing romanticism and individualism, the artists since the fifteenth century contributed increasingly of their individual qualities to their work, this contribution was completely on the side of the emotional and the "unconscious." The contemporary artist, on the other hand, is under cultural obligation to consciously investigate his sensations, and to cultivate in particular those of their qualities which, physiologically speaking, he does not necessarily share with other individuals. *Because the structure of the visual process is the same among all humans—even though the actual events of their perception differ according to the individual variations of their anatomical, physiological, and psychological make-up—the artistic expression of the differences is potentially intelligible to all.*

7. *Conclusion.* It may be argued that anatomical and physiological differences—except for "pathological" cases—are so infinitesimally small that if they do not evade notice altogether they are at least beyond presentation in art. To this one may answer that, in order to make himself understood, the artist must always resort to some degree of "exaggeration." Realistic artists exaggerated the "normalcy" of perspective, chiaroscuro, and color to such a degree that their "normal" approach finally lost its vital connection with actual perception and became a mere rule. That is why great artists like Michelangelo, Rembrandt, and others tried to evade perspective as much as possible. But the idea of the "normalcy" of spatial perception remains implicit in the work of all of them.

The exaggeration of the variability of vision by the contemporary artist, on the other hand, takes place on two levels: first elimination of the traditional invariables of vision, or at least their relegation to a secondary place in composition; and, second, increase of the "distortions" effected by the

actual dynamic *process* of vision, to a degree where they become plainly recognizable. "Intellectual identification" of subject matter is favored over "optical identification" (the traditional invariable), leaving the optical side of the painting completely free for immediate interpretation by sense perception and experience. In the evolution of art the traditional representation of space has itself become a subject matter of realistic painting; and there is an indication that variability in the representation of space is in turn becoming the subject matter of contemporary painting. This is in keeping not only with the present scientific possibilities of describing the same physical space with a number of different geometries; but also with the basic values of democracy which, in contrast to earlier political ideals, does not aspire to a final static "millennium," but recognizes its own values in the condition of constant change effected by an indeterminate process of adjustment of and by individuals and groups.

The first level of "exaggeration" in contemporary painting is exemplified by what we have come to call "abstraction," that is either a minimizing of traits needed for intellectual identification of subject matter, or even outright abandonment of this type of subject matter as in so-called non-objective painting. The second level is in that type of approach which gives contemporary painting its peculiarly subjective quality. It subdues and/or emphasizes contrasts of color, chiaroscuro, and textures as well as contrasts of movement, of proportions and relations, and of overlapping planes and shapes. This particular quality of contemporary painting derives its impetus not only from a new emphasis on the kinesthetic process of vision but also from the specific valuation that contemporary culture attributes to individual variability and to the variety among individuals (7, 12). It draws most of its actual visual material from that part of the visual experience of the artist which depends upon the perfect uniqueness of his psycho-physical equipment. If this variability is infinitesimally small, it is also infinitesimally complex. There is no reason why it should not be consciously experienced, and hence find expression in the work of art. Furthermore, the contemporary preoccupation with the significance of the infinitesimally small is not limited to art; it is equally strong in modern physics. It was an infinitesimally small discrepancy in Newton's astronomic calculations which led the way to the Theory of Relativity. And the Theory of Relativity in turn was one of the preconditions of nuclear physics which goes far below even the microscopic scale of investigation. Here the circle closes, considering that what is infinitesimally small in terms of the human scale of space experience may still be infinitely big in terms of energy.

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ALBERT MARQUET,
Courtesy Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., New York

THE ROLE OF CRITICISM IN THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF PAINTING

By Edward B. Garrison

A MORE than four years' residence in Italy, stronghold of Croceanism, has brought home to me with dourer impact than could anything else that one of the most ardent problems facing the historian of painting today is that of evaluating the relative worth of realist and idealist methods in recovering and writing history. Since I use the term, realism, in what is perhaps a somewhat unfamiliar way, it will be prudent to explain at the outset that by it I mean a philosophy which, differing on the one hand from materialist monism and on the other from idealist monism, holds both matter and spirit (idea) to be equally real but which has not yet come to rest, so to speak, upon any definite point along a scale ranging from pluralism through dualism to bipolar or binomial monism. But the realist in this sense does not accept the appellation of dualist or pluralist as a reproach; in fact, he considers preoccupation with oneness in philosophy a mere fetichism, carried over from theologizing, and he believes that philosophers had far better set about discovering by observation and cogitation what they can about the relations between the two or more reals.

It is, I believe, generally unappreciated that current disagreement in the historiography of painting is not merely a coefficient of personalities. Present-day writers are, in fact, divided into two opposing camps, conditioned by divergent philosophies and methods. Upon these, depend directly the divergent results they obtain. Prof. Roberto Longhi, one of the most distinguished critics laboring under idealist influence and, seen from a broad international point of view, a Crocean—as is almost every critic in Italy today—even though he polemicizes at times with Croce over details, seems so far to be alone in a consciousness of this situation, although he erred when in his recent *Giudizio sul Duecento* he tilted only at what he called the New York School, since this "school" is but a small section in the realist camp.¹ That the full implications of the situation are not commonly understood is aptly

¹ R. Longhi, "Giudizio sul Duecento," *Proporzioni*, Vol. II, 1948, pp. 5-54.

attested by a recent reviewer of my *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*,² who admired many of my attributions and historical conclusions while finding my method reprehensibly dull and arid, and who disagreed with many of Prof. Longhi's attributions and critical conclusions, while admiring his brilliant method.³ It may be admitted that idealist thought on art is born to whorish raiment, while much of realist thought must remain forever the drab. But this should not obscure the fact that the results in each case flow ineluctably from the philosophy and the method. The reviewer's position is, therefore, inconsequent. To discuss this problem fully would be far beyond the scope of a short article—it would involve probing entire philosophical systems. Nevertheless, I wish briefly to define the problem as I see it, to point out where I believe the errors lie, and to suggest, sketchily, a realist program.

Our interest is in history, and the specific problem facing us is to point out the damage being wrought upon the historical discipline by idealist criticism. This damage has its source in trends set up by the *later* works of Benedetto Croce, who there formulated an idealist method and applied it directly to the criticism of literature, dialectically propounding its perfect propriety to the other arts.⁴ This he could do because he affirmed, following a long line of predecessors, all the arts to be in essence one—aesthetic value to be categorically identical in all of them. Croce was led to his efforts by an interest and problem precisely the inverse of ours. His interest was in criticism, and the specific problem facing him was to repair the damage wrought upon the critical discipline by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century materialist, positivist and formalist historians, whom, for reasons sufficient to himself, he dubbed pseudo-historians. He pointed out, however, that the damage would not have been great had they restricted themselves to gathering what he called their exegetic material; but they had, in fact, set themselves up as critics—hence the necessity for combat.

Our complaint may, *mutatis mutandi*, be couched in similar terms: the

² E. B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting; An Illustrated Index*, Florence, 1949.

³ E. S. Vavalà, "Review of the Index of Italian Romanesque Panel Painting," *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. XCI, 1949, p. 115.

⁴ *Che cosa è l'arte, Pregiudizi intorno all'arte, Il posto dell'arte nello spirito, La critica e la storia dell'arte*, all, apparently, written in 1912, but first printed in the *Breviario di Estetica*, 1947; the article, *Aesthetics*, in the 14th ed. of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, printed in fuller form in Italian under the title, *Aesthetica in Nuce*, 1946; *La critica e la storia delle arti figurative*, printed in the *Nuovi Saggi* of 1926, and as a separate volume, with other essays added, in 1946. For Croce's thought on historiography more generally, consult the *Teoria e storia della storiografia*, 1916.

damage wrought by idealist critics would not be great did they restrict themselves to aesthetic evaluations; but they have, in fact, set themselves up as historians—hence the necessity for combat. Croce went on to discuss the proper role of history in criticism. We, on the contrary, are interested in the proper role of criticism in history. The problem is, as a matter of fact, not new. The idealist criticism plaguing the realist historian today duplicates in many ways the aestheticism that plagued Giovanni Morelli in the mid-nineteenth century by pretending through direct apperception to penetrate to the "soul" of artifacts and to attribute them by this means.

Croce, be it recalled, departing from the proposition that the *idea* of which all works of art are the thought distinctions, the *absolute* of which they are the manifestations, the *universal* of which they are the individualizations—or, to use homelier terms, that which makes art art—is pure aestheticity, limited art criticism to the consideration of that aestheticity, to the discernment, that is, of aesthetic value. The critic's only function was, so he said, to determine whether object A was a work of art or not. That is to say, if it had aesthetic value it was a work of art, if it had none, it was not.⁵ The affirmation that it had, or had not, aesthetic value was the affirmation of an aesthetic fact, to which a philosophical status equal with, nay, far superior to, historical fact was to be given. But in accordance with his pervasive weakness for practical compromise, he conceded that criticism might proceed to explain its perceptions in commonly understandable terms,⁶ which might even be largely formalist!⁷

Moreover, having discovered a malefic synecdoche in the work of those historians who had sought aesthetic value only in the formal aspects of works of art, he believed that he himself avoided a comparable fault by monistically amalgamating content and form, presumably by some principle related to immanency, although this is nowhere explained, and by locating aesthetic value somewhere in the amalgam. In reality, the gap between content and form cannot be so closed; they mean two different things to us, whatever dialectic unification be attempted. And even if it could, we should, for certain art-historical purposes, such as attribution, be obliged forcibly to reopen it and to concentrate our attention upon the material, the positive, the formal aspects of works of art, if for no other reason than that our concepts and images of these aspects are usually simpler, clearer and more communicable than those of the non-material non-positive, or non-formal aspects. And in-

⁵ *Breviario*, 1912, p. 93.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

⁷ *Critica e storia*, 1946, pp. 25-27.

deed, to the *practicing* idealist art critic himself, Croce's amalgam has never held; pure aestheticity has willy-nilly separated out as something non-physical, with the result that an idealist synecdoche has appeared, equal to that Croce laid at the door of his opponents.

Croce then proceeded, in accordance with well-known monistic principles—*vide* Hegel's *Weltgeschichte ist Weltgericht*—to identify his criticism with history. And following home the thrust, he condemned as abstract, sterile and, in the last analysis, irrelevant, denying they are history at all and stigmatizing them as mere "*filologismo*," all considerations of the physical work of art as such, all preoccupations, that is, which the realist admits as parts of, or instruments of, art history—the Herbartian, the Wölfflinian, and the rest—and including among them, reserving for it his special anathema, the preoccupation with attribution. And although in harmony with his weakness for practical compromise, he at times grudgingly accorded them an hermeneutic role in a more comprehensive scheme, in which criticism is rather than the all the goal, this concession was not meant to disturb the proposition that criticism is history, history criticism, nor that preoccupation with historical facts is mere "*filologismo*." He constantly exhorted the critic (read historian) to go beyond them to a consideration of aesthetic value, emphasizing the aesthetic value of individual artists, whom he considered to be the significant units in the manifestation of pure aestheticity.

Croce's position in this respect may perhaps be clarified by considering its genesis from his earlier views. His earlier distinction had been between the scholar, the man of taste and the historian.⁸ It had not been essentially different from a realist distinction between the historian, the critic and the critical historian (see below). And his early proposition that scholarship and taste both enter into the composing of history might be paraphrased in realist terms as: history and criticism both enter into the composing of critical history. But as time went on, he emphasized more and more the importance of his second term, taste, exalted to the rank of aesthetic judgment, denigrated more and more his first term, scholarship, degraded to "*filologismo*," and tended, finally, to simplify the equation by eliminating the first term entirely and identifying the second with the third.⁹

It is Croce's conceptual dissolution of history in criticism and his practical relegation of history to an unimportant secondary role that has caused the damage to the historical discipline with which we are concerned. For

⁸ Cf. the *Estetica* of 1902.

⁹ On other changes in Croce's aesthetic theories, cf. E. Roditi, "The Growth and Structure of Croce's Philosophy," *Journal of Aesthetics*, No. 3, 1942, pp. 14-29.

they have seemed to excuse and have certainly induced that widespread *horror rerum*, that flight, in very truth, from historical facts, that is manifest in the work of so many practicing idealist critics. Croce, it is true, foresaw the danger and expressed the hope it would not materialize; but he should have known it was inevitable. Nevertheless, as has been said, the damage would not have been great had these critics restricted themselves to aesthetic evaluations, accepting when they were indispensable the historical findings of others. But they have not. Though schooled to believe in, though convinced in their hearts of, the unimportance of historical facts, they have nevertheless dabbled in them, often at length. Thus, Prof. Longhi, after having in the introductory remarks to his *Giudizio sul Duecento*, already referred to, railed against "*filologismo*" in good Crocean fashion, proceeds to indulge in it à *outrance*. At the same time, owing to the Crocean atmosphere they inhabit, idealist critics have been led to neglect a proper technique in their dabbling and to hasten over the meticulous labor necessary to insure acceptable results. At least we seem justified in supposing this to be so, for how otherwise could their attributions be so bad? For example, in Prof. Longhi's portentous Judgment upon the *Duecento*, we find an evaluation of the Florentine, Cimabue, based upon works some two-thirds of which are not by him—a few not even Florentine—and an evaluation of a Pisan, his so-called "*Maestro della Madonna di San Martino*," who is, I here repeat, none other than Raniero di Ugolino, based upon four works, two of which—one-half—are not by him, all four of which are erroneously dated, and among which one of his productions may be sought in vain.¹⁰ These evaluations are, further, based upon an inversion of the historical relationship between the two masters, while evaluations of a Bigallo Master and a Margarito d'Arezzo turn topsyturvy their mathematically demonstrable relationship of firstling and follower. Nor does it suffice to reaffirm these attributions and datings as correct, for even should one wish to abstain from asserting categorically their incorrectness, it would still have to be said that many of the problems involved have not yet been solved, that further study and discussion are necessary.

But Croce's precepts harbored, in addition, an outright inconsistency, which has been an additional root of evil. It should be obvious that if the critic is to consider the artist, as Croce urged, and he must consider him if he is to be historical, he must know which works are his. And how without first and at length occupying himself with attributions and datings is he to

¹⁰ This inconsistency is not alone in this most volatile of all writers. After railing against the "*collezionisti miliardarii*," he proceeds by his exaltatory attributions of several mediocre works to render the most object servitude to them.

arrive at that knowledge? As a matter of fact, he must occupy himself with them (or accept, as suggested, the findings of others). To deny relevance and value to them, or even to belittle their importance was, therefore, a patent solecism. Indeed, it may be said that whatever relative philosophical positions be sought for history and criticism, and even if with the Croceans we fuse and confuse them, actual criticism has only a contingent value, measurable by the completeness and correctness of the "*filologismo*," to adopt Croce's pejorative term, that it embraces. Croce's contradictory exhortations to consider the artist but not to waste time on attribution have led idealist critics to write glibly about painters even though they have only the vaguest idea of what works are properly attributable to them. The performance by Longhi already cited is but typical of an entire school.

It is, finally, to be noted that the cavalier attitude of the idealist critics toward art-historical facts has flourished also because of persistent tendencies in idealism's attitude toward historical truth generally. All idealism has tended in vulgarization, i.e. outside the minds of its systematic philosophers, to revert to an outmoded solipsism and thus—to express it oversuccinctly—to deform *the world as idea* to *the world as my idea*, and by extension, the latter to *the world* in the past as *my idea*. The first step produced political totalitarianism.¹¹ The second has given us a sort of art-historical totalitarianism, better called confusionism," which irreducible positivity of events in the past comes to be wholly ignored. The past as well as the contemporary becomes as *I* think it, and we get art-historical *dicta*—often backed by an appeal to the dictator's seniority or authority—rather than sustained efforts to determine historical truth. While Croce made a desperate attempt, at least when he was most consistent, to give criticism the objectivity of history, his layman followers, worse philosophers than he, have, in effect, reduced history to the subjectivity of criticism.

In these considerations are already implicit realist answers to the question of criticism's true nature and of its proper place in history. The realist holds that while observation and cogitation demonstrate the reality of a unique and positive historical truth, toward a knowledge of which we may advance, even though we may never recover it fully, they fail to demonstrate the reality of a unique and positive aesthetic truth. To borrow terms from the physicist, at least the simple substantive of such an event in the past as the execution of painting A by artist A is an infinite and eternal ripple in the

¹¹ For an elaborate analysis of this train of thought, see A. Philip McMahon, *Preface to an American Philosophy of Art*, Chicago, 1945, Chapters I-V.

space-time continuum, while neither space nor time knows aught of whether the painting was good or bad. That is to say, it is proper to pose the question of truth as to the transitive proposition: artist A painted picture A (the specific form of the generic: an artist painted a picture), because the question is answerable without qualification, while it is improper to pose the question of truth as to the intransitive proposition: painting A is good (the specific form of the generic: a painting is good), because it is not answerable without qualification. If ten various men were witnesses to the event—or even one hundred—we should expect perfect agreement in their report of who painted the picture, but there would be no such expectancy of agreement in their qualitative judgments of it. It is the gross historical event that is the objective reality. It is eventually re-presentable in purely descriptive terms, with little subjective variation, most surely with the aid of contemporary record, but in any case by means of an exhaustive examination of all the evidence, both internal to the painting and external to it. On the other hand, even though it be admitted that aesthetic quality *originates* somehow and somewhere in the work of art, evaluation, the propounding of values, is entirely subjective. It varies in direct relation to variations in the evaluators. And since we may expect variations in these subjects to continue *ad infinitum*, so must aesthetic judgments continue to vary. Any uniformity that manifests itself is owing to such uniformity in the subjects as may occur, whether this be fortuitous, or whether it be orderly and in function of period or culture. Therefore, even if at our present stage of incomplete knowledge of the past, art history may fluctuate as widely and as wildly as art criticism, the equivalence is only apparent. For history-writing, or at least descriptive history-writing (see below), is wavering toward historical truth, whereas criticism, condemned to relativism, must vary aimlessly until the end of time.

Although in connection with critical judgments, Croce at one point refers to Kant's demonstration of their inevitable claim to universality,¹² and at another, in direct reply to the question as to whether they are universal or relative, says they are both,¹³ at yet another says they must vary with variations in the critic's definition of art.¹⁴ In fact, only the postulate of absolute aesthetic value is in keeping with the position he claimed for criticism, for only were aesthetic values absolute might criticism hope gradually to approach an aesthetic truth in the sense that history approaches a historical truth. But the realist holds that no more convincing argument for the

¹² *Breviario*, p. 90.

¹³ *Aesthetica in Nuce*, p. 38.

¹⁴ *Breviario*, p. 94.

absolute in value of any kind has ever been brought forward than for the gold bricks with which Swedenborg claimed the streets of Paradise are paved.

A second reproach may be moved against Croce in this respect. When all is said and done, it seems to me that all his explanations of aesthetic value are reducible to the tautological proposition that aesthetic value is aesthetic value, useless to the practicing critic in determining, even in accordance with his recommendation, its bare presence or absence. The practicing critic has, in fact, been left without criteria for judgment, for Croce's concept of pure aestheticity was as empty of content as was Kant's of moral duty. The results have been similar in both cases: the politicians touched by Kant simply wrote in their own content, and the critics touched by Croce have been obliged to do the same. This is one reason why idealist criticism is in the chaotic state it is today—why it has tended toward a solipsism that renders it well-nigh indistinguishable from the mere expression of personal tastes.

The bizarre personal criteria of judgment applied by Prof. Longhi in his diatribe against the *Duecento* are an excellent example. For in effect, this critic asks us to share an attitude that, though ostensibly based upon more sophisticated considerations, differs little from the puerile mid-nineteenth-century attitude of a Crowe and a Cavalcaselle, who despised thirteenth-century (and earlier) painting in Italy largely for the Winckelmaniac reason that it was, as they never tired of reiterating, incorrectly drawn! Indeed, Longhi cites these authors as paragons of critical acumen. In reality, the only portion of their work that aided in the acquisition of knowledge consists in their comparisons and groupings, however many errors be found in them, in other words, precisely in their "*filologismo*." What they thought critically of these paintings only makes quaint reading today; although it has an interest for the history of taste, it has none whatsoever for the history of painting.

But Longhi's *Giudizio* is not profoundly understood unless it is remembered that it was partly conceived and written before the War of 1939, when solipsist-idealist racism was rife in politics. It attests that something similar had penetrated even unto the sancta of art history, for his chief critical objection to Byzantine artistic expression in Italy is, I believe, in spite of his explicit protest to the contrary, its very Byzantinism, to which he affixes all manner of scurrilous epithets. However, all art in all places and at all times has borrowed liberally from beyond political—and racial, if such there be—frontiers; if a pure national or a pure racial art has ever existed outside the caves, I do not know of it. We might as well condemn the entire

output of the Italian Renaissance on the ground that it borrowed from classical Greece—indeed, this would seem to me a good deal more reasonable.

Croce's legislative restriction of the art historian to criticism must, of course, give way to a more comprehensive historiographic program, in which criticism, along with all other relevant studies may be assigned proper roles. Such a program should be elaborated in proper systematic, but also in proper temporal, order. The gathering of material—artifact finding—is an important preliminary step—hence the emphasis I have elsewhere laid upon it. But artifacts, in order to become elements of history, must be brought into proper relation one with the other—must be woven, that is, into what may be called *descriptive history*.¹⁵ This involves attribution to school and to artist, as well as dating. The problems implied are often difficult; their solution requires a well-developed technique and sustained effort. They are especially difficult—and especially prevalent—for periods such as the Romanesque, from which a large portion of the surviving painting is anonymous. It should be obvious that a descriptive history of, let us say, thirteenth-century Florentine painting that includes non-Florentine or later works will be of little worth, a descriptive history of Cimabue's painterly activity that includes works not by him of no greater worth.

Correct descriptive history is the firm base upon which the more evolved forms of history must be erected. There may be erected, first of all, the structures of *interpretative history*. Interpretation in this sense implies the discernment of styles, however variously these be defined, and their origins, the tracing of their development and of the interplay of influences, as well as the philosophical explanation of causes. It will vary, and has in the past varied, in accordance with the special systems of individual historians or groups of historians. And its possible variants in the future are many.

Finally, to such interpretative history may be adjoined aesthetic evaluations, to produce *critical history*. This is the proper place of criticism in realist historiography. But criticism's point of view needs to be carefully defined. Shall we endeavor to inform ourselves of the opinions of contemporaries to each work, shall we endeavor to place ourselves in the position of critics in some intermediate period, chosen for the excellence of its critical activity, or shall we criticize all past works according to criteria of our own? It seems to me that if either of the last two points of view is chosen, as it almost

¹⁵ This *descriptive history*, be it noted, is more limited than the *beschreibende Geschichte* of Wölfflin, which corresponds rather with what will here be termed *interpretative history* (see below).

always is, we come perilously close to taking the work of art out of all historical context and to treating it as an object in our own contemporary life, in other words, that we have then to do not with historical criticism but with art appreciation, which has no place at all in historiography.

Now it is probably true that very little description can be entirely cleansed of interpretative comment or of value-judgments, and that no interpretation can be entirely cleansed of value-judgments. Not only so, but certain critical judgments are indispensable tools for refabricating the texture of history. One example may suffice. As between Coppo di Marcovaldo's Orvieto Madonna and the recently discovered Magdalen Master's Madonna,¹⁰ iconographically almost identical, neither of which is dated and either of which might therefore theoretically have preceded the other, it is the critical judgment of Coppo as the "greater" of the two painters, whatever that may mean, that leads to the decision that his is the original composition, the other the copy. But interpretation and evaluation are the incorrigibly unstable elements in the overall scheme, and the latter is by far the more unstable. Criticism has, in effect, been rewritten for each period and each place, and interpretation has often come to be rewritten, whereas descriptive history as here defined is gradually being incorporated into the great body of acquired knowledge. Other things being equal, the most correct description will be that which is cleanest of interpretation and evaluation, the most correct interpretation that which is cleanest of evaluation.

It may, then, be said that the value of descriptive, interpretative and critical history will be in direct proportion to the completeness and correctness of the factual knowledge they comprise, that the value of interpretative and critical history will be in direct proportion to the completeness and correctness of the descriptive history they comprise, and that the value of critical history will be in direct proportion to the completeness and correctness of the interpretative history it comprises. The historical value to be put upon such judgments as those made by Prof. Longhi of a Cimabue and a "*Maestro della Madonna di San Martino*," based as they are upon incomplete knowledge of the artifacts and a high percentage of error in the facts of descriptive history, is, therefore, very slight, howevermuch the genius and eloquence of the judge may enchant us.

In such a view, it seems only reasonable that from the standpoint of the temporal ordering of the discipline our major efforts be devoted first to the collecting of artifacts, then to attribution and dating, and thereafter to inter-

¹⁰ Garrison, *op. cit.*, Nos. 25, 637.

pretation of various kinds, and that only subsequently to all this can valuable critical history be produced. That impetuous and impatient generations of the critically minded should choose to ignore this program may be humanly understandable, but it is nevertheless regrettable, if for no other reason than because the criticism they produce is rife with error and is condemned to an even flimsier evanescence than would be criticism more opportunely timed. Prof. Longhi, in distinction to Croce, has very recently accepted this evanescence of criticism and desires to make the best of it.¹⁷ All well and good! The error lies in allowing this attitude to contaminate history writing, in practicing both criticism, for which it is a valid premise, and historiography, for which it is not, in wanting, that is, to hunt with the historians while running with the critics. But in any case, criticism can take its proper place in art historiography only if critics invent a soberer language to express their perceptions of value than they have hitherto employed and if they apply with greater perspicacity and, above all, a fuller sense of responsibility than they have yet displayed, whatever currently acceptable criteria for aesthetic judgment they may have been able to excogitate.

In the review of my *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*, mentioned at the outset, my similar counsels are condemned because they are perfectionist. But surely the fact that counsels are perfectionist is not an argument against them—no more does the realization that we cannot attain perfection acquit us of the duty of striving toward it. When the contrary view comes to be commonly held, we shall be well on our way into a new Dark Age. Indeed, the fact that such an argument could be proffered in all blitheness is a sad commentary upon our times, or at least upon the quality of history (and criticism) that some of us can be misled to condone.

¹⁷ Cf. "Proposte per una critica d'arte," *Paragone*, Vol. I, 1950, pp. 5-19.

OROZCO'S MISSION

By Alfred Neumeyer

I

SURROUNDED by vast, half-completed projects, Clemente Orozco died in the summer of 1949, at the age of sixty-six. By his death the world has lost one of the few men of stature in the realm of painting. In writing down the word "stature" I remember what a little, what a frail man Orozco seemed to me when I visited him in his modern apartment-studio house in Mexico City in 1947. Black and sallow, the eyes protected by glasses with unusually heavy lenses, hard of hearing, with only one arm, I looked at one who usually would be called an invalid. Yet this incapacitated being was the same one who, year in, year out, would cover the walls of Mexican buildings with an "orbis pictus" for his people. At the moment he was occupied with the murals for the Jesus Hospital in Mexico City and the huge abstract composition for an out-of-door theater executed in automobile spray. His mind was then preoccupied with technical problems of weather-proof color. Yet at the same time he was curious to learn about Existentialism, whose wave had just reached Mexico. Our companion, Justino Fernandez, Orozco's biographer, introduced us to the painter and brought him a volume by Heidegger. We spoke about American art schools, about German expressionism. His remarks were shrewd, his expression amused—observant. He seemed to me the very embodiment of the triumph of the creative spirit over physical limitations. Thus his "stature" did appear in small, invalid Orozco.

His biography can easily be obtained from two basic books on the artist.¹ It is unnecessary to repeat it here. Yet surprisingly little has been written about the underlying ideology of his vast mural cycles, an ideology much harder to decipher than the clear-cut primer-illustrations of Rivera.

After this essay had been written, appeared the valuable article by Jean Charlot, *Orozco's stylistic evolution*. COLLEGE ART JOURNAL IX, 2 (1949-50) p. 148.

¹ As direct sources were used:

Jose Clemente Orozco, *Autobiografia*, Mexico, 1945.

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The most comprehensive book on the artist:

Justino Fernandez, *Jose Clemente Orozco. Forma y Idea*. Mexico, 1942. (With extensive bibliography.)

And hardly anything has been done to see Orozco's style in the context of the art of his time. Both will be the endeavor of this essay.

II

Prompted by inclination as much as by the necessity to make a living, Orozco started out as a political caricaturist. Basically, he remained one throughout his life. Even his quiet and objectively written autobiography shifts occasionally into an ironical pseudo-objectivity; that is, into complete, nearly inhuman, detachment from his own person. The revolutionary field of action is transformed, in these caricatures, into a "theatrum mundi"; in which everyone is a marionette. The satire is more poisonous, more mordant, more vilifying than that usually to be found in North America or Europe. The enemy is a monster, the weapon against him is diabolic laughter.

Besides these caricatures, Orozco painted, in 1913, watercolors of bordellos, drowned in emptiness, desolation, dullness and ugliness. The faces are mostly of stupid deformation, the bodies sack-like, but clad in gowns and shoes of the latest fashion. Horror is painted with colors which flow delicately, almost tenderly. From a psychological point of view these watercolors with bordello scenes are significant. One rarely finds in Orozco's oeuvre a positive representation of woman but frequently a monumentalized interpretation of the whore. It seems to be rooted in a youthful trauma. To the human body of both sexes there adheres from now on an element of terror. The spirit from which the study of the nude proceeded in Europe, the nude in which Orozco himself demonstrated so much interest, this spirit of aesthetic admiration transmitted to us by the Greeks, does not exist for him. He sees in the body a figurative expression of human pains and passions. Passion itself is pain for this painter, but pain transfigured into action.

In 1917 a sequence of watercolors appeared, also produced as lithographs, in which the artist turned to the theme of the revolution. Yet he is not concerned with its glorification but with its purely human aspects; the soldateska, its women, its dead. And again, despair, hopelessness, monstrosity, emptiness. Man is a beast. Laughing he is a devil, crying he is—man. For the first time the comparison with Goya comes to one's mind. Everything is unmitigated, trenchant, deadly. With these works Orozco qualified himself for the large cycles which he painted after 1922. Up to 1927 he executed the murals in the Escuela Preparatoria, the old Baroque Colegio of San Ildefonso in Mexico City. Rivera, who unrolled his cycles in another patio at the same time, dealt with the same subjects: the world of the Indian,

Franciscan mission and colonial exploitation, capitalistic exploitation and revolutionary combat. These themes were told by Rivera in the manner of an epic story with innumerable details of equal importance; in Orozco, they develop in the manner of a drama in which the story of man's passion is elucidated by action. Next to still conventional and trite subjects, new formulations arise. There is "la despedida," a soldier kissing the hand of his old mother on taking leave. He bends down, holding her hand as one drinking from a bowl. In "Hombres sedientos" thirsty men drink from a waterfall. Infinite emergence and unquenchable need are thrust against each other. "Franciscanos," a monk, bends like an enclosing wave over the skeletal body of a starved Indian, lifting him up from the ground. Thus, man *is* thirsting for love and thirst *can* be relieved. Yet this is the exception. Here, for the first time, the motive emerges which Orozco has repeated at Dartmouth; the Indian Christ destroying his cross with the axe. Had His Passion been in vain? Is Christ turning into Prometheus revolting against his destiny? The roots of Orozco's mystical speculation become visible while not fully explainable. From now on the artist severs himself from the Marxian ideology of Rivera and Siqueiros since he is concerned exclusively with the human. In Pomona College (1930) he paints Prometheus, in Dartmouth (1932-34) Quetzalcoatl, the savior, and again Christ, the destroyer of the cross. The hero and bringer of light leads the masses, the pseudo-hero seduces them. This too is the content of the tremendous fresco in the governmental palace of Guadalajara (1936-39). Hidalgo, one of the liberators of Mexico from the Spanish yoke, a god-father like vision, herds the masses which drift ahead of him, an apocalyptic flood. This wave consists of diminutive particles, each murdering or being murdered. On the side wings of the double armed staircase, Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin perform in a hellbent clown theatre. The representation is of such vehemence, of such chaotic terror that "a last judgement" seems to break over the spectator. How different is his work in the Hospicio Cabanas, one of the most beautiful examples of neoclassical architecture in the entire world. Here the severe architecture of Manuel Tolsa has necessitated a bridling of the former vehemence, forcing the painted historical criticism of Orozco into individual, clearly formulated scenes. Man as the bringer of light, and as its destroyer, as conqueror and as colonizer, the suffering masses and the militarized masses, the demagogues, dictators, and despots—they are assembled here, far away from the mainstream of history, and yet in spite of their geographical removedness, they form the most important comment of an artist to our epoch of terror. A parallel to the mob

is the machine. The machine as the killer of human initiative and freedom, as the murderous instrument of wars, and as impersonal slavedriver, appears over and over again in the frescoes of the last twenty years. By the creative energy of a tragic poet human existence is crystallized into new and daring images. From now on Orozco, the poet, stands beside Orozco, the painter. Today the Hospicio is an orphanage. The children walk to their daily play and chores while above them, in a cupola, man rises from the terrestrial zone of suffering in an apotheosis of flames.

In the Supreme Court in Mexico City, the judges must walk under their own judgement pronounced by Orozco on the walls of the building. What respect of a government for the creative freedom of the artist! Justice on earth is blind, but a Holy Revenger descends with searing flames and chases the bribable judges from the ground.

Looking once more over the extended oeuvre for its motives, we recognize in it a painted "Dies irae, dies illa." Man is depraved and his chance forfeited. By nature he is ugly and mean. His striving for light is charged with explosive despair, leading him to new crimes. The powers of light take body only in individual acts: Franciscan love, Promethean liberation, scientific illumination.

It must seem unusual to begin the interpretation of an artist's life—work with a discussion of his subject-matter. Subject-matter is nothing in art without its form. Yet here is a painter of whom one may say that the form would be meaningless without its content. This is rather an exception in our formalistic period. With Orozco, form is enhanced by its content, content is transubstantiated by its form.

This last sentence points to the zone in which subject-matter and form meet. In a true work of art, the two are inextricably interwoven, and the first concept appears already as neither formal nor exclusively literary. Orozco says about this, "In every painting, as in any other work of art, there is always an idea, never a story. The idea is the point of departure, the first cause of the plastic construction, and it is present all the time as an energy-creating matter." (Qn. Justino Fernandez, *op. cit.*, p. 31.)

Since the image-idea is the first thing, a separation between content and form can be considered only as an auxiliary method for the art work.

III

Next to the study of Orozco's frescoes, it was primarily the exhibition in the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City in 1947 which permitted an

insight into the working methods of the artist and the development of his style. To this we can add his autobiography and his article about mural painting during the last twenty-five years.

Orozco's painting is, like that of the Italian masters, entirely based on "disegno." The comprehensive exhibition of his life work demonstrated that each figure was thoroughly prepared in drawings, that compositional sketches related the concept to the given wall space, and that the figures were further elaborated in final "cartoons." Since Orozco has created hundreds of wall paintings, there exist thousands of drawings. One can recognize among them two main types; there are on the one hand the figure-studies, on the other, free idea sketches. The figure-studies are based on the academic traditions of the last centuries which means that they describe the figure in terms of a continuous contour and model the form by shadow gradation with the highlights turned toward the source of light. The personal element can be found in the energetic articulation of the joints, in the tenseness of the muscles and in the tendency to harden the natural roundness of forms by straight and sharp angles and, occasionally, even to geometrize them in the manner of Cézanne. A study for the figure of "Fire" in the University of Guadalajara will illustrate this method. The "scorzo" (foreshortening of body forms), so often used by the painter, introduces an intensively spatial and optical element by the help of which he obtains effects similar to those of Mantegna or Melozzo.

The second type of drawings is closer connected with the creative process. It appears first in his caricatures but is later also applied to other fields of subject-matter. Orozco chooses, for these impetuous drawings, India ink. Here a truly graphic sensitivity is at work and the line itself is made the expression of acrimony. Orozco has been aware of this peculiar quality because he had executed in Jiquilpan, in the Biblioteca Gabino Ortiz, monochrome frescoes which, in the manner of monumentalized pen and ink drawings, project "disastros de la guerra" on the wall (1940). The effect is that of vibrant and trenchant wire, loaded with electricity. Contraction of the line brings about unexpected and vehement accents negating the possibility of pleasing tonal values. Drawing becomes aggression and onslaught. And since creation means struggle for Orozco, exaggerations and misconceptions are not missing.

Orozco's greatness as a human being and as a creator found its adequate expression in wall paintings. With due respect for Michelangelo, here was the same necessity for expansion on large spaces. Here was also the same innate sense of the relation of the composition to larger, architectural units.

Here was the wholesome compulsion to subordinate and, by subordination, to solidify his visionary exuberance. Here finally was the relation of art to its mission in life, and were it only that, like Moses, he had broken the tablets of law. For an artist like Orozco, the renaissance of mural painting in his country was an incident of historical good fortune which enabled him to realize himself far beyond his keenest hopes.

In the first, and partially unsuccessful, frescoes of 1922, one can discern clearly the half digested foreign influences: Italian painting, especially Botticelli (how strange a combination!), and Parisian cubism. Both elements prove helpful in the growing mastery of monumental and architectural tasks. To these influences is added the absorption in Pre-Columbian architectural and sculptural forms with their geometrical tendencies, necessitated by the iconographical contexts in which they appear. Yet in the same cycle of the Escuela Nacional one finds a majority of paintings in which Orozco's individual vision is already rendered with entirely individual means.

Progress in the years from 1923 to 1926 becomes rapid. The method of painting is that of true "fresco seco." The rather thinly applied color preserves, as in the case of Michelangelo, the character of the individual brushstroke, growing together with the wall into an indissoluble unit. The forms are simplified, the limbs as the carriers of action are enlarged, the forms of the body are angularly broken in their silhouette or, by means of inner shadow, they become prismatic volumes. Crystalline architectural forms in the background strengthen the composition. For the first time the principle of exaggerated diagonal foreshortening is introduced in "The Trench" (1924). The sharp angles of the pyramidal construction take up contact with the diagonal surge into space, resulting in trenchant staccato rhythm which finds its closest parallel in Max Beckmann's splintery form. This system of design is most vitally related to the arches, spandrels and squares of the architecture. Thus Orozco shows himself, by his innate understanding of architecture, superior to many of the great fresco painters of the post-Michelangelesque period. For the Prometheus fresco in Pomona College (1930) Justino Fernandez, in his book on Orozco, has pointed out the relationship with Greco's Sebastian in the Cathedral of Palencia. The triangular composition fits but painfully into the nearly semicircular architecture.

The murals in the New School for Social Research in New York (1930-31) are dry and didactic in form and content. The artist, always fascinated by geometrical problems, had followed enthusiastically the then rampant theories of Jay Hambidge's "Dynamic Symmetry" (New York, 1923). The result was a decorative stylization of design in which the subject-matter is

forced into a mechanical system of order in the manner of Egyptian mural composition.

The frescoes at Dartmouth reveal the artist as still partially under the spell of these theoretical, mechanical devices, but the theme is carried out with vigorous new plastic energies. Besides, these frescoes present the most comprehensive ideological program of the artist: the theme of the ancestral races of America, of the Spanish colonization and of the North American settlement.

The three large fresco cycles in Guadalajara (1936-39) reveal the overcoming of a mechanical division of planes and volumes and the return to spontaneity and freedom. Now there emerges also a new painting method: the design itself is executed by the brush, a method of execution to be observed with Tintoretto, Daumier and Van Gogh. Contour and internal form fuse more intensively while highlights, with flashlike vehemence, illuminate and accentuate the form. The range of color becomes at the same time enriched. Here one finds small and minor scenes of visionary intensity of color, such as the bottle green caravels of Columbus or the tragic colorism in black and gray of "Humanidad doliente." The art of color and of design have merged in a unique style of graphic painting. Therefore the cycle in the Hospicio may be called, in the interpretation of the architectural space as well as in its colors, the happiest of his works.

This graphic style gains its monumental monochrome formulation in Jiquilpan (1940). One discovers in it the grand monumental enhancement of his youthful impressions of Posada's black and white art. These murals demonstrate his overcoming of purely geometrical patterns, replaced by a free and vehement flow of the design.

The frescoes in the Supreme Court in Mexico (1941) represent a blend of the monochrome style with free composition. The larvae-like bodies are painted with gray and flesh color electrified by convulsed, white highlights. Against this monotony is posed the red of the banners and the pink of the architecture. Everything is violent: the downthrust of the revengful spirit of Justice, the flight of the judges, the breaking of the old structures by the revolutionaries. Color itself trumpets the theme of judgement. In the central fresco, opposite the staircase, the green, white and red flag of Mexico, guarded by a rose colored Jaguar, becomes the symbolic and the coloristic center of the entire cycle and its architectural setting. Never before has the flag of a country been made so much the evocative symbol of a great pictorial composition.

In the latest group of frescoes' the complete interpenetration of idea

(concept) and form is revealed. In these murals depicting purely mechanical forms, the nightmare of the machine age, the enslavement and the destruction of the free individual is rendered. In some of Orozco's earliest frescoes one can already discern the motive of the piled up debris of architectural parts and engine fragments. This has its significance as a motive, but at the same time the junkpile holds substantial formal values for composition as one may see in the work of other contemporaries (Rico Lebrun). It becomes enlarged as a subject in the representation of "Despotism," of the "Militarized masses" and of the "Dictators" in the Hospicio Cabanas in Guadalajara; all three of them to be found on the same wall, and there conceived as a unit. Parallel with the rendition of a mechanized life, appears a semi-abstract, geometrized design, enhancing the consonance with the surrounding architecture. The theme returns in the pseudo-fresco (screen) for the Museum of Modern Art in New York, "The Divebomber" (1940). Its design consists of chains, tanks, parts of airplanes. Buried in the chaotic pile, three tragic masks stare at you with empty eyes.

The murals in the old monastic church of the Hospital El Jesus in Mexico City, on which Orozco worked with interruptions from 1942 on, seem to unite, as far as one could judge from the scaffolds, the theme of satanic mechanization with hellish chaos. The human figure turns into torpid puppets or obsessed monsters merging with the world of the inorganic.

Finally, in 1948, Orozco completed a colossal fresco in the stadium of the Escuela Normal in Mexico City in which he rendered a "mechanical ballet" composed of wheels, rollers and chains, paralleling, in his own manner, the style of Fernand Léger. This means that the motive of the man-made, inorganic debris contains not only a negative reference but also, aesthetically, a positive one. It offers to the artist a possibility to leave free rein to his imagination in search of a world in which the transitions from reality to abstraction, from the mechanical to the organic, remain fluid. Who could say before such a picture where content ends and form begins? Orozco is a master because content and form have been conceived together, unfold together, and become representation together.

IV

To determine the absolute value of a contemporary artist is for us, his contemporaries, not possible. We can only give testimony to those human and artistic values which we believe are embodied in his work. What we *can* discern clearly today are the forcefulness, the independence, the wealth of ideas, the daring of this painter. What we *can* recognize is the favorable,

historical constellation in which a talent, an important theme and wall space have been brought together. Such favorable circumstances are unique in our period. Edvard Munch had the talent and the wall space, but his epoch and his people could not offer a great theme for the Oslo University frescoes. Hans von Marées had the talent, to a certain extent the theme, but, with one exception, no wall space. The Muralists of the revolutions and pseudo-revolutions of the last twenty years had wall space and a theme, but neither the freedom nor the talent. Our own recent fresco painters did well enough in many instances, but were hampered by literalism or by lack of imagination. Mexico represents in the sociology of contemporary art an isolated case of good fortune. There were a score of artists of high intelligence, knowledge and ability who took advantage of the same fortunate historical constellation.

As to the style of contemporary Mexican mural art, it may be called "expressionism". However, it is an expressionism which has undergone an architectonic disciplining by the study of Italian fresco painting and of abstract art. Yet Expressionism can be made to include a great deal, and Orozco has more of Greco and Daumier than of Kokoschka or Rouault. If one wished to compare Orozco to other contemporaries, one might think in the earliest works, because of their combination of cubism and expressionism, of Franz Marc. Looking at the aggressive satire and form, one would recall Rouault and Beckmann. Later generations will still more clearly discover their contemporaneity. Yet closer than to any of these artists Orozco approaches the Picasso of "Guernica." Here exists a similar, probably a Spanish, vehemence in the emergence of a self-created language of symbols executed by the dynamic layout of the picture plane with trenchant and dissonant lines and planes. Such partial discordance is nevertheless held together by the iron grip of the larger units. Compared with Picasso, Orozco, however, is the more conservative master in whom the traditions of the classical period of fresco painting during the XVI century are still alive.

This raises the question of whether this artist belonged more to the end of an epoch or to the inception of a new one? I am more inclined to see in him the conclusion of traditions which lasted in Europe for five centuries, traditions which have become extended to world-wide scope by his Mexicanism. Orozco is the first member of his nation to belong to a world history of art. More than that, is he not perhaps the first painter of the entire American continent who might be admitted to the Olympus of the masters? True, abroad one knows the North American painters, Copley, West, Homer, Whistler and Eakins. Yet good artists as they were, none of them has de-

cisively enriched the Occidental world of ideas and forms. It is different with Orozco. He is the first who has offered an ideological analysis of the American continent with the themes of the Pre-Columbian era, the Spanish colonization, and the industrialization with its dictatorships and revolts of the masses. We face today such concern with large themes with preconceived suspicion, remembering the historical panoramas of the XIX century with their world historical ballets. Yet it is not so much the vast theme as the vast vision of the theme with Orozco. We are thrown into a world of Dantesque measurement but one without redemption through grace. Differing from an Ingres or Cornelius, a Puvis de Chavannes or Rivera, he has nowhere accepted the conventions of history without personal re-interpretation. Orozco alone amongst the Mexican painters, has resisted the glorification of the Indian past or of the contemporary revolution. With acids words he points out in his autobiography how this modern revolutionary romanticism uses the attributes of Christian Iconography with reversed accents: "Fusilades and machine gun massacres instead of bows and arrows, airplanes instead of angels, dirigible projectiles and atom bombs instead of divine condemnation, and a confused and phantastic Paradise in a future which would be hard to predict." (Exposition Nacional, Jose Clemente Orozco, Mexico, 1947, p. 7.)

Contrary to such an attitude, Orozco has given to his nation and to the world a much more profound and personal interpretation of history. From the first migrations of the aborigines of the continent, to the inhuman but magnificent civilization of the age of the Pyramids, on to the military and spiritual conquest of Spain, and finally to the days of capitalism, it is always a mankind destined to perish. Yet always out of its masses rise, in each period, a few bringers of light, a few martyrs for light.

His art has the rare fusion of caricature and moral indignation expressed in monumental forms. One can find this quality perhaps only, and on a more intimate scale, in Goya with whom he also shares the nearly voluptuous identification with terror and fear. The creative impetus rises from the depth of being where the terrible and the tender dwell together. Unfolded in an unceasing configuration of forms, this impetus becomes free from its merely instinctive aspects and clarifies its abysmal origins by application to the world. Yet in interpreting himself through an objective theme, Orozco at the same time enlightens life for us, his coevals.

TOWARD A NEW DEFINITION OF RELIGIOUS ART¹

By Peter Fingesten

THE symbolic art forms which have accompanied Christianity illustrate its growth and changes through the millennia. Just as there are manifold interpretations of early Christian frescoes, a multiplicity of individual opinions on certain sayings in the Gospels, so there are today many points of view on Christian symbols. The greatest force lies in the symbols themselves, many of which transcend time, country and religion. All of the various styles in Christian art, from the Early Christian to the Baroque, have utilized the same symbols . . . and a sacred art without symbols is unthinkable.

At this time the problem of art and religion has captured great public interest. Practically all the major Christian denominations have voiced their concern in the relationship between modern art and the church.² In Jewish circles this problem of art and religion has also received more than casual interest.³ To this sampling of published statements one may add the recent exhibition of Ecclesiastical Sculpture sponsored by the National Sculpture Society (May-June, 1950, French Gallery, New York), another sponsored by the National Association of Women Artists (November, 1950, Argent Gallery, New York). In Oklahoma City there was an exhibition Art and Religion (October, 1950) and, on an international scale, the exhibition of Modern Catholic Art at the Vatican which opened September 4, 1950. No doubt there are many creative artists with an interest and leaning toward devotional themes who form but a small proportion of all the circles, ecclesiastic and lay, who feel this to be one of the particular problems of our present day religious crisis.

For over 1500 years Christian art and architecture have accompanied the

¹ The material for this article has been selected from a manuscript by the author, *Christ, the Cross and Krishna, A New Study in Christian Art and Symbols*.

² Pope Pius XII, Encyclical Letter (*Mediator Dei*), *On the Sacred Liturgy*, New York, The America Press, 1948.

Conference on Religion in American Life, sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies, Council on American Civilization, Chicago, April 23-24, 1950.

Religion and the Intellectuals, A Symposium, Partisan Review Series, No. 3, 1950.

³ Herbert Howarth, "Jewish Art and the Fear of the Image," *Commentary*, IX, 2, 1950, pp. 142-150.

fluctuations of western culture. They have bridged whole civilizations, linking the Hellenistic with the western and the Oriental-Byzantine with the northern. What was once a close relationship between the artists and the church has come to a parting of the ways. Today, few creative artists work for the church. The artist has not only gained social freedom but he has outdistanced the more conservative tastes of most ecclesiastics who prefer the traditional styles, or even if they are more inclined towards modern art they insist upon the use of traditional symbols.

When a churchman commissions "religious art" he has something particular in mind. When an artist creates "religious art" he has probably something else in mind, not less "religious" but perhaps less traditional. An abstract carving by a devout sculptor has the same religious significance for him as a saint surrounded with symbols would have to an ecclesiastic. Since there seems to be a constant misunderstanding on the definitions of religious art, some remarks are in order to help clarify this problem.

The art of the church is commonly called "religious art." We believe this to be a misnomer, a misunderstanding of what the arts were expected to accomplish within the religion. It disregards the true position of the craftsmen who rendered it and the immense influence of ecclesiastical authority which, through its patronage and supervision was largely responsible for its creation. To call church architecture and icons "religious" is romantic at best, for it neither describes its true purpose and derivation, nor does it necessarily correspond to its deeper content. A careful analysis of the function of the arts and symbols that served the church is imperative, since their goal was, above all, religious instruction.

Art as such is neither sacred nor profane. It is either good or bad art. What determines the difference in these classifications is the function it is put to and the presence or absence of certain traditional symbols.

"Ecclesiastic" art is the general term which encompasses all the arts and architecture that pertain to any church, generally speaking. "Canonical" art is a more specific definition. It refers to an art that follows particular rules and regulations prescribed by official decrees, ecclesiastic councils, synods, encyclicals, etc., which defined the role of art in the church or worship and limits it to approved symbols. "Didactic" art refers to all the canonically defined arts and symbols that in addition have the specific purpose to teach dogmatic and theological precepts by sight and not by the word.

"Liturgical" art comprehends prescribed, approved and fixed arts and symbols that correspond in material, shape and tradition with the requirements of the liturgical uses to which they are put. It is prescribed in the sense

as the liturgy of public worship is prescribed. Thus it must also be canonical. "Sacred" art (hieratic) is the general term which sums up all the above definitions. It means the arts or symbols especially dedicated for religious use. Sacred art, including altars, vessels, vestments, architecture, sculpture and painting is consecrated by prayers, rites and ceremonies. Sacred art, therefore, refers mainly to canonical correctness and to the approved symbols contained therein than to the intrinsic, that is, the stylistic or artistic quality of the art work, symbol or architecture itself. Even though we have reason to believe that style was also subject to ecclesiastical decrees the above definitions prescribe *what* the artist must do, not *how*.

At this point we may say all devotional art not subject to the above restrictions is religious art. It does not always find its way into a church. It is not an art commissioned by an ecclesiastic but created by the artist as a free creative effort like so many works by Rembrandt, Blake, Rodin, or Rouault. Religious art, in contrast to sacred art is a personal mode of expression chosen by those artists who were religiously inspired. They often invented personal symbols for their feelings, visions, or sensations, instead of employing the approved symbols handed down by tradition or defined officially. Many artists, ancient and contemporary, have created religious art while in their most inspired moods, but this art is more difficult to define since such inspirations which sometimes border on the mystical underlie many of the greatest artistic creations of all times.

The Latin church was always aware of the problem of art in its relation to religion. Records of the various church councils which dealt with sacred art from the Synod of Elvira, about 315 A.D., the Second Council of Nice (Nicaea) 787 A.D., to the Council of Trent, 1545-1663 A.D., and the recent encyclical *Mediator Dei* (1947) by Pope Pius XII prove that there has never been an unanimous definition and acceptance of sacred art. There have always been discussions about the role, purpose and subject matter of sacred art and its service of the church dogmas. It is generally known, of course, that up to the 4th Century A.D. the primitive church rejected the figurative arts because of the then potent prescriptions against idolatry. Most of the symbols we now consider typically Christian were either completely unknown before the 4th Century, or were still claimed by other religions and mystery cults.⁴

⁴ Clement of Alexandria, the great Christian writer of the early Third Century, expressed himself against symbols. "If one go round and inspect the pictures and images, he will at a glance recognize your gods from their shameful forms: Dionysos from his robe; Haphaestus from his art; Demeter from her calamity; Ino from her head dress; Poseidon from his trident; Zeus from the swan; . . . and if one sees a

Before that time the primitive church had exhibited a remarkable consistency with the highest ideals of the New Testament. It was a time when the spiritual aspects of their religion absorbed the attention of the people. They had as yet no familiarity with luxuriously decorated churches, colorful priestly vestments, symbols, icons and mosaics. The writings of the great church fathers Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Lactantius, Arnobius of Sicca and others, testify to their rejection of material symbols and an insistence upon a purely spiritual approach to God with purely spiritual means.

During the first few centuries of its existence the primitive church had no art of its own. A Christian art arose only after classic art had lost its sense of proportion, its techniques were forgotten and its characteristics weakened. Early Christian icons, with their stiff, formalistic attitudes, reveal a profound engrossment with the ascetic ideal which is more spiritual than mundane. They reflect the Judaic tradition which rejected completely, in accordance with the Second Commandment, anthropomorphic representations of spiritual concepts or of God. The ancient religions of the East relied upon art and symbolism as concrete evidence of their notions of the universe. This relationship has since changed though the affinity between art and religion still exists. This mutual dependency of religion and art and symbolism had been weakened considerably during the first few centuries of Christianity but later, especially during the Middle Ages and the Counter Reformation they were brought into a closer relationship again.

Christianity, in its radical social concepts, drew no caste lines between slaves and master, and between rich and poor. The ensuing revolution reverberated not only in social and spiritual spheres, but also, inevitably, in

statue of a naked woman without an inscription, he understands it to be the golden Aphrodite." *The Ante Nicene Fathers*, New York, 1917-1925, II, p. 188.

"For, in sooth, the image is only dead matter shaped by the craftsmen's hand. But we have no sensible image of sensible matter, but an image that is perceived by the mind alone,—God, who alone is truly God." Clement of Alexandria, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

During the Third Century the pagan Celsus attacked Christianity on the ground that its very lack of symbols indicated that it was a mystery cult. Origen refuted this attack brilliantly in his book *Contra Celsum*. "It is not therefore true that we object to building altars, statues and temples, because we have agreed to make this the badge of a secret and forbidden society; but we do so, because we have learned from Jesus Christ the true way of serving God, and we shrink from whatever, under a pretense of piety leads to utter impiety those who abandon the way marked out for us by Jesus Christ. For it is He who alone is the way of piety, as He truly said, 'I am the way, the truth, the life.'" *op. cit.*, IV, p. 647.

The Synod of Elvira, about 315 A.D., in its 36th canon, prohibited the figurative arts in churches. "There should be no pictures in church building, lest what is worshipped and adored might be painted on the walls." Walter Lowrie, *Art in the Early Church*, New York, 1947, p. 29.

the domain of art. Its symbology had to be all-inclusive to be universally appealing. Christianity abhorred the appeal to an elite. It offered the possibility of salvation to all men. The liberating forces that advanced with a vigorous Christianity took from the select the carefully guarded symbols and proffered them to the masses. For this reason, some of the cryptic symbols of old became general property even though their meanings were not always revealed to the people.⁵

Certain symbols like the *vescica piscis*, the nimbus, the wheel cross, the triangular nimbus, the trident, the lily, the dolphin, the dove, the hand of God, etc., had gained such influence over so many people that early Christianity would not eradicate them altogether. It included many of these earlier elements into its own symbolical vocabulary. We may assume that the early Christians were familiar with the ideas and symbols of the Asiatic and Mediterranean religions that flourished in Rome as well as in the Near East. Many theologians of the medieval and modern church realized this and without categorically prohibiting the use of the latter, maintained that these symbols, in the borrowing, were transfigured and spiritualized. In this respect the great tradition of sacred art continues unbroken from the earliest sun-worshippers with their wheels, circles and the like, to medieval and modern canonical representations of Christ with His head framed in a golden halo, a nimbus or emanating rays. Christianity and certain already established symbolic art forms met, clashed, and ultimately united, but not without centuries of violent controversy.

The artists and craftsmen who were asked to symbolize the new religious concepts had to draw for inspiration upon forms already established by the older cults. It was not considered offensive to frame Christian concepts within art forms hallowed by tradition and burned into the memory of the people.⁶

⁵ "In Byzantine church architecture a fixed rule developed by which all walls and vaults were ornamented with pictorial representations that had an underlying secret symbolism." Wilhelm Schamoni, *The Face of the Saints*, New York, 1947, p. 27.

⁶ "The origin of this symbolism is not to be defined." H. Jenner, *Christian Symbolism*, London, 1910, p. xiii.

⁷ "When, after the triumph of the Church, Christian sculptors were confronted with subjects hitherto unattempted, and found themselves under embarrassing obligations of depicting on stone the personages and stories of the Bible, they were happy in the opportunity of being able to draw inspiration from the portrayals which the Persian Mysteries had popularized. A few alterations in costume and attitude transformed a pagan scene into a Christian picture. Mithra discharging his arrows against the rock became Moses causing the waters of the mountain of Horeb to gush forth; the Sun, raising his ally out of the ocean, served to express the ascension of Elijah in the chariot of fire; and to the time of the Middle Ages the type of the tauroctonous god was perpetuated in the images of Samson rending the Lion." Franz Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, Chicago, 1910, p. 228.

We know from considerable evidence that the non-Christian sculptors who were commissioned to carve sarcophagi for the Christians were responsible for the choice and arrangement of the various symbols to be carved thereon. They were instrumental in patterning their choice of devices by which to symbolize the soul or the Resurrection, for instance. When the motifs were not offensive to the Christian buyers, the sculptors left them untouched. In time such ancient theriomorphic symbols as the phoenix, the pelican and the peacock were believed to contain a meaning particularly Christian. In this manner a new tradition rose upon the old.

Most of the symbols we know as Christian had their prototypes in the East and in certain pre-Christian religions. Admittedly it is very difficult to ascertain how the symbols migrated toward the West and into western Christianity. The process is fairly clear for some of them, for others we know only that they existed in the iconography of eastern religions and then reappeared in Christian sacred art. How this transition was effected is not always clear. We have some idea though as to who introduced them into Christian sacred art. It included pagan sculptors who sold sarcophagi to the Christians, and pagan artists who became priests of the church during the Second to the Fourth Century.⁷

Many Christian artists copied older symbols or were influenced by them. Other symbols were assimilated by official decree in religious councils. Some of the people who embraced Christianity after Constantine's Edict of Milan, 313 A.D., brought along with their devotion elements of earlier cults. As the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (VI, p. 12) puts it: "... the evil which the West felt so deeply after Constantine, that is to say, of the crowding into the church of multitudes who were only half Christianized, because it was the fashionable thing to do. ..." Syncretism among the various religions and cults during the first few centuries of our era exerted an especially powerful influence upon Christian acceptance of symbols. Still another potent factor in the diffusion and distribution of symbols were the Roman armies, traders, travelers, and

⁷ "Idol-artificers are chosen even into the ecclesiastical order." Tertullian, *Ante Nicene Fathers*, III, p. 64. See also H. M. Kallen, *Art and Freedom*, New York, 1946, pp. 76-77, who throws some light on the conditions that provoked this statement. The artists of the Roman empire were banded in unions. They had their own statutes, customs and religion (Bacchic). As the empire declined the artists and craftsmen became serfs of the emperors. They were not permitted to move, or to choose any but the hereditary profession. Some could not even marry out of their occupational group. Their only way out towards freedom was to join the ranks of the Christian priesthood. Apparently so many craftsmen became priests by 365 A.D. that it was prohibited for certain crafts to join the priesthood.

migrants of all kinds, who exchanged ideas and symbols, as well as coins and merchandise with the peoples of Europe and Asia. There can be no doubt that this exchange of symbols existed, even though some of the paths by which this was accomplished are now obscure.

The transition of these symbols into Christianity met with greatest opposition however from the eastern churches. They denounced "... the ignorant artist who with sacrilegious lust for gain depicts that which ought not to be depicted and with defiled hands would bestow a form upon that which ought only to be believed in the heart."⁸ The Latin church and its partisans in the eastern provinces emphatically affirmed the inclusion of sacred art into worship and anathematized all those opposed to it. The Second Council of Nice, in 787, vigorously condemned "those who dare to reject any of the things which are entrusted to the church,—the Gospel, or the sign of the cross, or any pictorial representation of the holy relics of a martyr."⁹

Byzantine opposition to sacred icons can be traced back to the early days of Christianity. In the Syriac churches this opposition evinces itself as early as the Second Century A.D. (In Greece, opposition to belief in images and their magic properties arose as early as the Sixth Century B.C. with the philosophers Heraclitus and Pythagoras. Thereafter it was a constant theme in Greek philosophy.) The subsequent struggle between Rome and Byzantium was the logical outcome of the entire Syriac attitude toward images. But Byzantine hostility extended only to the excesses of image worship which had reached in the eastern provinces the proportions of a mania. The people would grind icons into fine powder and mix them with some fluid. Then they drank the potions as medicine for the magic powers believed to be contained in them. Others would choose as godfathers for children not living persons, but sacred icons. Famous pictures of saints were washed on the feast-days of those saints; the waters sanctified by this process were sprinkled over the congrega-

⁸ Walter Lowrie, *Art in the Early Church*, p. 34. The following is a more accurate quotation from the "Epitome of the Definition of the Iconoclastic Conciliabulum" held in Constantinople, A.D. 754. "What avails, then, the folly of the painter, who from sinful love of gain depicts that which should not be depicted—that is, with his polluted hands he tries to fashion that which should only be believed in the heart and confessed with the mouth? . . . The evil custom of assigning names to the images does not come down from Christ and the Apostles and the holy Fathers; nor have these left behind any prayer by which an image should be hallowed or made anything else than ordinary matter." *A Select Library of Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, New York, 1900, Second Series, XIV, p. 543.

⁹ Joseph Pohle, *Mariology, With an Appendix on the Worship of the Saints, Relics and Images*, London, 1946, p. 154.

tion as a benediction. In Edessa, this water was also used as a lotion for the eyes. Likewise, the water with which portraits of saints had been washed, or into which some color from the image had been scraped off, was administered as a medicine to invalids. Sacred art was attacked but religious and decorative art flourished greatly in Byzantium both during and after the iconoclast controversy. "True, the Iconoclast epoch was marked by great intellectual and artistic progress. The Isaurian emperors were not puritanical: while proscribing the images, they loved ostentation and the worldly glamour of court life; and for the better decoration of their buildings, they encouraged a profane art inspired by ancient tradition as well as by Arab models. . . ."¹⁰

The symbols and art forms that were attacked so forcefully in the East met with little or no opposition in the West after the Fourth Century. The ecclesiastics confirmed them with new interpretations and allegories supported by scriptural passages and thus they became sacred in a relatively short time. From the Fourth Century onwards sacred art became an important factor in the western church. Nobody has expressed this with more clarity than Jacques Maritain: "Sacred art is in a state of absolute dependence upon theological wisdom . . . because the sovereign interests of the Faith are at stake in the matter, the Church exercises its authority and magistracy over sacred art."¹¹ Similarly we hear from James Cardinal Gibbons: "Why should not we make the eye the instrument of edification as the enemy makes it the organ of destruction? Shall the pen of the artist, the pencil of the painter and the chisel of the sculptor be prostituted to the basest purposes? God forbid! The arts were intended to be the handmaids of religion."¹²

As early as the Second Council of Nice it was stated that art (the perfection of the work) alone belongs to the painter, while ordinance (the choice of the subject), and the disposition (treatment of the subject from the symbolical as well as technical or material point of view) belongs to the Fathers. At this crucial council the Bishops not only defined precisely the veneration due to images but absolutely restricted the subject matter, symbology and treatment of sacred art to ecclesiastical authority. Sacred art became fixed and dominant while religious art faded into the background. These decrees on sacred art and the subordinated role assigned to the artists gave the ecclesiastics a free hand and removed any responsibility from the artists.

The Second Council of Nice, however, was not universally recognized. Not only did the successors of Irene revert to iconoclasm but Charlemagne,

¹⁰ Charles Diehl, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, Princeton, 1925, p. 64.

¹¹ *Art and Scholasticism*, New York, 1938, p. 144.

¹² *The Faith of Our Fathers*, Baltimore, 1917, p. 208.

her contemporary, did not agree with or accept its decisions on sacred art. The *libri carolini*, which Charlemagne sent to Rome, daringly set aside the decisions of this council. In spite of the controversies and strange history surrounding these Caroline Books it is with great wisdom that they declare: "We permit images of the Saints to be made by whoever is so disposed, as well in churches as out of them, for the love of God and of His Saints; but never compel anyone who does not wish to do so to bow to them (*adorare eas*); nor do we permit anyone to destroy them, even if he should so desire."¹³

Where the Second Council of Nice decreed under threat of anathema and excommunication, prostration, veneration, the embracing and kissing of holy images, and reserves for itself the absolute right to "choose and dispose of" the symbols, Charlemagne's stand illustrates rationality and tolerance toward religious art. He invites beauty to enter the House of God, and offers it protection, but he discouraged superstition. In this respect Charlemagne foreshadowed the Protestant position toward art in its relationship to religion. The Reformation rejected sacred art, but at the same time it opened the way for an art of the people and for a religious art without outside interference. As John Calvin said, "Yet am I not so scrupulous as to judge that no images should be endured or suffered; but, seeing that the art of painting and carving images cometh from God, I require that the practice of art should be kept pure and lawful. . . . Therefore men should not paint nor carve any thing but such as can be seen with the eye; so that God's Majesty which is too exalted for human sight may not be corrupted by fantasies which have no true agreement therewith."¹⁴ And Martin Luther: "Pictures, bells, eucharistic vestments, and the like I hold to be free. . . . We concede that they may be used freely, provided pomp and luxury be absent; for you please not God the more by blessing in vestments, nor the less by doing without them."¹⁵

About 850 years after the Second Council of Nice, during another great crisis, a council was evoked to define questions of dogma and sacred art. Where formerly the Byzantine emperors and their armies opposed sacred art it was challenged by the upheaval of the Protestant Reformation. Therefore, "The Council of Trent enjoins bishops and pastors to instruct their flocks that 'the holy bodies of saintly martyrs and others now living with Christ—are to be venerated by the faithful, for through these (bodies) many benefits are

¹³ *A Select Library*, XIV, p. 582.

¹⁴ G. G. Coulton, *Art and the Reformation*, Oxford, 1928, pp. 407-408.

¹⁵ *Lutheran Cyclopedia*, New York, 1899, p. 24.

bestowed by God on men; so that they who affirm that veneration and honor are not due to the relics of Saints, or that these and other sacred monuments are uselessly honored by the faithful . . . are wholly to be condemned as the Church has already long since condemned, and now also condemns them'.¹⁶

Another statement from the same Council of Trent hints at the fact that some people would be tempted rather to worship the body, relics and images, instead of the spiritual reality and calls it "straying". "And if perchance some have strayed, from their lack of knowledge in their veneration, it were better to teach such an one, rather than that the veneration of august images should be banished from the Church."¹⁷ Sacred art had acquired still another quality, not only in the eyes of the faithful but in highest ecclesiastical quarters, namely that it is "holy". "... according to the Nicene Council [confirmed by the Council of Trent] there is something in the images themselves which entitles them to veneration, inasmuch as they are 'sacred objects' (*res sacrae* . . .) and as such must be treated with reverence."¹⁸

It is exactly this belief in the "extra something" in sacred art which the Protestants challenged and which prompted even Geremia, Bishop of Cremona to write in his Pastoral letter of 1905: "The image in itself is nothing. There is nothing superhuman or divine in it, nothing whatever. It is not to it that we pray or do reverence, it is not to it that we put our faith, but in that which it represents. For this reason the having one image or another, *this* statue or *that*, is a matter of indifference. Every now and then it is not so with the faithful. They want a particular image or statue and honor and venerate it more than another, although often it might be artistically inferior to the other, and even not decorous; yet if it is suggested to alter or remove it somewhere else, or exchange it for a better, they all protest and cry out and oppose its removal. Is not this a sign of superstition? If they act thus because the image is dear to them, and dearer as having been revered by their fathers, because bound up with memories, or because it excites their devotion to a greater degree, then their conduct may be tolerated. But I am afraid that the true reason is that in their ignorance they see in it an undefinable something divine, a certain mysterious virtue, and this is a remnant of paganism and idolatry prohibited by the Council of Trent."¹⁹

This council not only reaffirmed all the decrees on sacred art formulated

¹⁶ J. Pohle, *Mariology*, p. 155.

¹⁷ *A Select Library*, XIV, p. 554.

¹⁸ J. Pohle, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

¹⁹ *On Religious Worship and Some Defects in Popular Devotion*, London, 1906, pp. 105-106.

at the Second Council of Nice, but proceeding one step further, it also restricted the field of style, the last domain in which the artists could express themselves freely. ". . . images shall not be painted and adorned with a seductive charm. . . . That these things may be the more faithfully observed, the holy Council decrees that no one is permitted to erect or cause to be erected in any place or church, howsoever exempt, any unusual image unless it has been approved by the bishop."²⁰ Whereas a schismatic northern Europe experienced its Renaissance as a result of the Reformation and, overcoming a belated Gothic, opened up the field for the discovery of itself, of nature and the people, sacred art was arrested by the decrees renewed and passed by the Council of Trent.

Even though the decrees of the Council of Trent concerning sacred art are still binding within the Latin church, she reserves for herself the right to change them. "The veneration of holy images is no positive command, but the Church is free either to introduce and encourage or to limit or even prohibit it. . . ."²¹ It is clear that the artists, after the Second Council of Nice, had no voice in the important subject of sacred art. They were craftsmen in the strictest sense of the word. Up to the period of the Council of Trent there had been left to them the small area of "art" (the perfection of the work). After Trent however, even this was placed under ecclesiastic authority. The Early Christian and medieval craftsmen who became free artists during the late Gothic and early Renaissance lost their precious ground gained during the Counter-Reformation.

The modern agency which supervises matters on sacred art and the ritual is the "Sacred Congregation of Rites" in Rome. This organization enforces the decrees of all the councils and synods which dealt favorably with sacred art. The recent encyclical *Mediator Dei* (1947) supports this tradition in paragraph 187. "First of all, you must strive that with due reverence and faith all obey the decrees of the Council of Trent, of the Roman Pontiffs, and the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and what the liturgical books ordain concerning external public worship." This encyclical tries to pave the way for a modern sacred art in a church whose spokesmen have traditionally preferred the Classic, the Gothic and the Baroque. "It is perhaps significant that of all this contemporary Catholic art nothing strikes us as truly artistic, save that which continues and reinterprets a traditional style."²²

Such a formula for style has been given recently by the Right Reverend

²⁰ E. G. Holt, *Literary Sources of Art History*, Princeton, 1947, pp. 243-244.

²¹ J. Pohle, *Mariology*, p. 165.

²² E. I. Watkin, *Catholic Art and Culture*, London, 1942, p. 168.

Ildefons Herwegen: ". . . it may be added that pictorial representations should be conceived essentially in a large way, with a monumental character; that is the first requirement of church art. That this large conception be inspired with warm meaning is the second. Finally, in as much as all true greatness is linked with balance, and all real meaning with form, the art of the Church demands formal, restrained expression. A combination of early-Christian, Roman grandeur and medieval Germanic depth of feeling, crowned with the distinguished beauty of the antique—that is the ideal of religious art, an ideal which, in the consummate synthesis of form and expression, tradition and progress, assures a truly communal art."²³ Unfortunately this formula is so general that it could be of little assistance to artists who might wish to follow it.

In another context we find corroboration for the fact that the modern artist is expected to sacrifice his individuality and his school (style) when he creates sacred art. "It is the duty of the Christian artist to serve the Church as she should be served. Sacred art has a purpose, for its object is religious teaching by the powerfully effective means of plastic representation. The mission of the artist is to lead the way in this teaching and not to betray it. This exacts from the artist the sacrifice, to a greater or less extent, of his individuality, of his own small rights, but if he learns to obey, and to understand the high significance of obedience—how great will be his reward! . . . Catholic art demands sacrifice of the artist's individuality. . . . When the artist subordinates religion to his artistic imagination, taking no account of the dogmatic, liturgical and social requirements to which sacred art is necessarily subjected—it being an 'instructive art'—he falls into individualism. . . . In fact and in deed, when an artist treats of sacred art he is called upon to abandon his individuality, his lonely studio, and the confines of his school."²⁴

After the above statements were published, the encyclical *Mediator Dei* came out in favor of modern art in the Latin church. It invites modern art to serve dogma and faith but it subjects sacred art to the rigors of tradition and demands the cession of the artist's individuality. As paragraph 195 expresses it, ". . . Recent works of art which lend themselves to the materials of modern composition, should not be universally despised and rejected through prejudice. Modern art should be given free scope in the due and reverent service of the church and the sacred rites, provided that they preserve a correct bal-

²³ "The Nature of Religious Art," *Liturgical Arts*, I, No. 1, 1931, p. 6.

²⁴ G. de Reynold, "The Mission of the Christian Artist," *Modern Sacred Art*, 1938 Annual, London, pp. 97-99.

ance between styles tending neither to extreme realism nor to excessive 'symbolism', and that the needs of the Christian community are taken into consideration rather than the particular taste or talent of the individual artist. Thus modern art will be able to join its voice to that wonderful choir of praise to which have contributed, in honor of the Catholic faith, the greatest artists throughout the centuries. Nevertheless, in keeping with the duty of Our office, We cannot help deploring and condemning those works of art, recently introduced by some, which seem to be a distortion and perversion of true art and which at times openly shock Christian taste, modesty and devotion, and shamefully offend the true religious sense. These must be entirely excluded and banished from our churches, like 'anything else that is not in keeping with the sanctity of the place'."

More recently again the Pope singled out and condemned two modern styles on the occasion of the reception for artists at the first International Congress For Catholic Artists (Rome, September, 1950). "' . . . all maxims which made art fall down from its sublime role profane it and make it sterile. "Art for art's sake." As if it could exist by itself and be an end in itself, condemned to move, to drag itself on the same plane as sensual and material things. As if through art the human sense did not obey a higher calling than that of simple appreciation of material nature.' The Pope said that 'immoral art' professes openly to 'lower and enslave the spiritual powers of the soul to carnal passions.' He added, 'for the rest, "art" and "immoral" are two words which are a contradiction in terms.' He implicitly condemned all surrealist and abstract art whose meaning is not perceived immediately by normal persons."²⁵ There can be no doubt that sacred art amply defined by the Second Council of Nice, the Council of Trent and the encyclical *Mediator Dei* has a very particular role and function in worship and the liturgy, which is far different from that of religious art. One seeks inspiration from without, the other from within. One is subject to authority, the other to the freedom of expression.

The arts of India and those of Tibet are illustrations of "sacred art" *par excellence*. The deities of the Hindu, the Mahayana Buddhist and Lamaist pantheons are subject to the most exacting rules set down in *sāstras* which prescribe the *mudrās*, *vahānas*, attributes, proportion, and even the expressions of the deities in greatest detail. This sacred art of the East has been static for centuries, for these rules are faithfully obeyed by the artists and artist-monks. When the arts dedicated for religious use froze into a canon,

²⁵ *The New York Times*, Sept. 6, 1950.

further artistic and stylistic development was stopped.²⁶ In its repetition of canonical symbols and stylistic execution of icons, sacred art has been more confined in the East than in the West.

As much as there exists besides good sacred art one without religious content (mechanical repetition of traditional symbols) there exists a religious art in the West without a sacred content. Religious and sacred art, contrary to common usage, are neither synonymous nor interchangeable. These terms should be applied henceforth with greatest discrimination in order to avoid confusion at this period of renewed interest in the mutual relationship between art and religion.

²⁶ "In the early period of the history of Indian art, the imagination of the artist was not tied down by mechanical rules, which became the base in later times. The early sculptor was guided by his own observation and imagination, and dealt with his subjects with a freedom, which made him able to produce very pleasing results. He had an eye for the beautiful as well as for the humorous, and he always gave free scope to the display of his powers, although he never forgot the religious motive behind his workmanship. . . The second and the most potent cause that has injuriously affected Indian iconoplastic art is the hard and fast rules laid down in the *Āgamas* and the *Tantras* for the making of images. There is no doubt that the authors of the *Āgamas* devoted a large amount of attention to the beauty of the human figure studied in general; and as a consequence of this they naturally laid down the proportions and measurements of the various limbs and organs of the human bodies. The belief that these measurements ought not to be disregarded under any circumstance came into vogue later on in recognition of the authority of the *Āgamas* and the *Tantras*. The artist thus became handicapped, and his imagination had no freedom of action. Not much scope could be given to the display of the genius of the artist, under any circumstances, although there is an *Āgama* rule to the effect that 'the artist should fashion the image as best as he could'. . . It is not that the Hindu does not desire that the images of his gods and goddesses should be sculptured beautifully; but he will not easily tolerate any glaring departure from the rules laid down authoritatively in his *Śāstras*." T. A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Madras, 1914, I, part I, pp. 29-32.

("The Hindu *śāstras* prescribe image worship to weak unevolved persons in particular. The *Jābāla-upanishad* distinctly asserts that the *yōgin* perceives *Śiva* in his heart, and that images are meant for ignorant men. Again, the worship of images it is said brings on re-birth and is not therefore to be resorted to by the *yōgin* who desires to free himself from them") *op. cit.*, p. 27.

"The statues have an opening in the lower part or back, into which prayers (*manī*), printed on rolls of paper are put. Statues become sacred images as soon as these prayers are ceremoniously enclosed and the opening sealed. These sacred images are identified by the differences in ornaments, the various symbolic hand gestures, called '*mudrās*,' the sitting or standing positions, called '*āsanas*,' the thrones on which they sit, the mounts called '*vahānas*,' and by the various symbols they hold. Often the symbols vary, but identification is usually possible in the more popular deities, because the old Tibetan images and paintings were made by monks or lamas according to certain rules." Antoinette K. Gordon, *The Iconography of Tibetan Lamaism*, New York, 1939, p. 7.

Modern religious art sprang from the decaying canon of sacred art at the close of the Gothic period. The increased power and independence of the craft guilds, together with the growing awareness of the craftsmen as creative artists, resulted in an art detached from the church. This new art had a greatly enriched vocabulary and possibilities of expression. Representations of Christ changed from canonical stiffness to much more humanized attitudes. The Madonna and Child became expressions of the maternal relationship between a mother and her child. Scenes of the trades were included in stained-glass windows. Base sculptures commemorated the dignity of the crafts. Gradually the art of the church became an art of the people. Religious art, which is a free art, can dispense with the canonical symbols since it expresses deepest religiosity by psychological insight and expression alone.

Religious art has emancipated itself from the fixed pattern that had been prevalent for over a millennium. The right to interpret the Lord according to the individual conscience began with the Humanism of the Renaissance and the Reformation. Many Twentieth Century artists have chosen Christ as their subject, but they express their feelings and meditations, or any other devotional theme in the light of their individual religious experience and artistic styles. These representations are not necessarily less spiritual than those that follow the definitions of sacred art. Such religious art which surely is acceptable to all people has risen to great prominence because modern artists are capable of expressing the most intense religious feelings without following the dogmatic tradition.

We firmly believe that the most meaningful heritage of the past is contained in the figurative arts, architecture and literature. Religious feelings have always been among the most vital inspirations to art, from the cave frescoes of Cro-Magnon man to the easel paintings of many present day artists. In contrast to sacred art which is always subject to the tradition and ecclesiastical authority and decrees, Dr. Russell C. Stroup, a contemporary minister, sums up the position of the Protestants in regard to religious art. "We must not lead the artist captive bound to the chariot wheel of the Church. We must follow him as he, in turn, must follow the Spirit which 'bloweth where it listeth'. If we believe in inspiration, and I do, then to seek to circumscribe the artist is to seek to fetter God, Himself. We, of the Protestant church, do not believe that the Church has supreme authority. . . . Every man, but especially the artist, may as certainly interpret the will of God or be guided by the spirit of God."

Only from a free religious art can we hope for a new definition of the spiritual truth in terms of art. William Blake wrote: "The world of Imagina-

tion is the world of Eternity". This world of eternity is accessible to every artist who, when inspired ascends into the realm of intuition and even prophecy. In last analysis, the sublime is always mysterious, beyond dogmas, canons, and time. Genius transcends tradition, and all great art has something of a religious spirit in it.

NON-CANONICAL VESCICA PISCIS: Shiva, the third deity in the Hindu triad, within the vescica on the flaming pillar, *lingam-yoni*. Ellora Caves, about 4th to 8th Century A.D.



CANONICAL VESCICA PISCIS: Christ enthroned within the vescica. German woodcut. 15th Century.



THE TEACHING OF SCULPTURE

By Hugo Weber

THE term sculpture today has no meaning unless it is understood as a metaphor, as a convenience with a meaning behind it which has to be redefined. Certainly sculpture cannot be seen any longer under one aspect of traditional craft like cutting stone and wood or modelling in clay and casting bronze. A safe definition could be the "three dimensional realization of human thoughts, emotions and desires."

Under "teaching of sculpture" I could understand two things. First, appreciation of sculpture in the context of history of art and history in general. The historical survey of sculpture as one aspect only of man's visual communication should deal with the contemporary situation as well. Such a course would be basically *analytical* and could include laboratory practice to give deeper understanding of the formal mechanics of plastic communication in all periods.

Secondly, "the teaching of sculpture" could be general form education through workshop practice in the context of fundamental visual education. Such a course would be basically experimental and would have to be a combination of visual and structural training. The emphasis would shift between technical and structural investigations and plastic construction of volume-space and space-volume, attempting an integration of both aspects. Firsthand experience with a variety of typical materials, technical processes and plastic conceptions would be the main goal. It would be desirable to have a practicing artist to work hand in hand with competent technicians in teaching such a course. The traditional aspect of teaching sculpture, namely, observation of nature form, could have a part in it.

"Sculpture" exists as an item in most college curricula. Since that is a fact, a topic like "teaching of sculpture" seems to make sense. However, it would be useful to ask first basic questions such as: Do we mean by "teaching of sculpture" education of sculptors—that is, education of professionals—or making use of sculpture, sculptors and whatever goes under this name for wider educational purposes? I believe that "Art" as an activity or end in itself has no place in a curricular structure. "Sculpture," therefore, since it cannot be viewed independently of "Art", has no place either.

I would be at a loss to define "Art" but I would like to express a sus-

picion. Goethe once said, "If you do not have religion, you should at least have art", and I think he completed the statement by advising that one should have both. This liberal creed, I believe, still is the prevalent conventional and popular philosophical conception of art. I suspect very strongly that in a watered-down form this liberal conception of art as a kind of substitute religion, a vague metaphysic, is the official philosophy behind most existing college art departments. This position is rarely admitted and leads, therefore, to all kinds of strange confusions. The art department in a university structure is not taken altogether seriously. It is a kind of extravagance, an addendum, tolerated to take care of the students who seem to dislike academic disciplines in the hope of some strange revelatory therapeutic effects resulting from painting still lifes in the manner of Renoir or Picasso or some still older or newer authority. Since the student, to fit into a competitive society, wants to be up-to-date and is able to exert a pressure on curricular direction, the newest authoritative fad has a chance to take a foothold in college art departments. At present some fragmentary aspects of Bauhaus methodology are likely to be superficially included—superimposed on an incompatible background of departmentalized teaching.

"Sculpture" in such a context must have aspects similar to painting along the lines of sanctified self expression in recognized patterns. As a struggle with obstinate materials, chipping stone or modelling with clay, it affords in addition the opportunity of getting rid of excess physical energy. It may even serve as a kind of high-brow equivalent to college football. All this takes place in most cases in a Renaissance frame of mind, the glorification of the human figure meaning in the very end self glorification. If the Renaissance spirit and pride has become a little stale, the mechanics take over. Modelling from the nude becomes a pretext to relive the hope of the classic static absolutes of beauty. Lately these practices took a more clearly romantic, nostalgic form under the influence of Henry Moore's stream-lined popularity and Maillol became unfashionable some time ago.

It seems to me that one must analyze contemporary sculpture in order to arrive at a clear view of what sculpture could mean in an educational process. It is obvious that the work of sculptors of interest today is experimental. The directions of the experimentation are manifold. In some of the laboratories (studios) we find an extreme interest in new techniques, new materials and new ways of dealing with materials, less frequently new conceptions of form and space; in other words, the interest is largely in the development of a new formal vocabulary. But there is also an undercurrent of a search for a new symbolic content which may use the new or even older

vocabularies. In short, the situation of modern sculpture is complex, varied and problematic in essence. It is certainly evident that modern sculpture has no central place in society. It is basically an esoteric endeavor. Some of modern sculpture has become commonplace, has seeped into popular consciousness, most of it in the form of new fashions, new mannerisms, new copying and lip service. For instance, the preoccupation with mobility of some artists as an interest in dynamic principles has become a new static item—mobiles. It has produced a flood of new gadgets used today for decorative purposes in show windows or homes. Some of the new vocabulary has been adopted more or less successfully in the design of commercial objects. In other words, some by-products of the work of sculptors of the past fifty years had an effect on people whether they know it or not. Granted that it is a peripheral effect mainly, it is important to recognize that creative work today only comes into effect, tangible to the masses, in its by-products. In education the situation is not much different and cannot be much different. When we think about education, we are forced to think about mass education and that is what formal education today means. It would be useful, therefore, to distinguish more clearly between that which is tangible, accessible to formal education and that which is not. In the visual arts this distinction seems to be less common than in the verbal arts. For instance, learning how to read and write and studying the grammatical structure of language is not confused with creative writing. The creation of poetry is not confused with the critical appreciation of poetry or simply digestion of poetry. A less pretentious conception of teaching "Art" could do much good at this point. It would not have to exclude the acceptance of experimental principles in education nor an education which takes care of different levels of demand. I believe that visual education should engage creative artists in preference to mere school teachers since they are more likely to see clearly and use the distinction between that which is tangible, basic, fundamental and that which is inaccessible to the adventure of formal education. It does not make sense to discuss mechanics of teaching without re-evaluation of principles. If the quality of teaching depends upon the talents and integrity of the teacher, the curricular direction can only depend upon an integral philosophy behind it.

CORRECTION

Due to an unfortunate oversight, the caption for the cut on the inside of the cover on the last number of the JOURNAL was not included. The illustration was a detail from a drawing by Roger Anliker for Menotti's opera, "The Medium" and was included in the young artist's first one-man show at Seligmann's Galleries in September, 1950.

AN APPRAISAL OF CONTEMPORARY ART EDUCATION

By Stefan Hirsch

THE appraisal of contemporary art education is the appraisal of revolution. It is contemporary with a revolution in the arts which has gone on these hundred years and which inescapably becomes its subject matter. It lags somewhat behind the artistic revolution because schoolmasters feel temperamentally more cozy in the past and a bit alienated by the present which has the nasty habit of upsetting their beloved generalizations. But despite the schoolmasters, art education cannot escape the lure of the trumpets and banners, and the rebellious ideas they proclaim.

It is impolite to admit to revolutionary descent, unless, as in the D.A.R., one has become thoroughly respectable and shudders a bit when a revolution breaks out elsewhere. The Mexicans still have the courage to consider themselves in revolution even though the bloody part of it is over. We prefer to speak of the maintenance of the freedom of the individual, rather than of the revolution forever. Let us examine the revolutionary character of American art education, if not of American education in general, and see whether we are carrying out its tenets or whether we merely pay lip service to them.

When not quite two decades ago, Dartmouth College sneaked José Clemente Orozco literally into the back door of the Baker Library to do a little sample fresco, it resulted in one of the greatest sets of murals in this hemisphere, and incidentally gave a tremendous impetus to the idea of the artist in residence. It virtually began the revolutionary action which within a very few years made almost every university in the country put artists on their faculties and allow the students academic credit for this work. That they had been anticipated by progressive institutions like Wisconsin and little pip-squeak shock troopers like Bennington and Bard and other progressive institutions, matters as little and as much as the Boston Tea Party. I know of course that long before this, practicing artists of reputation had taught girls in fashionable schools to do polite little paintings they could talk about at different kinds of tea parties, without making any impact on the art of the country. But I do not think it exaggerated to say that the idea of the artist on the college faculty took the country by storm and is beginning to make that impact.

Why did this happen? Many trustees, administrators and faculty members in institutions of higher learning are still uneasy about it, and might stop it immediately if it did not attract so many students. I will have a few words of consolation and justification for them a little later. But why did it happen, and flood admissions offices with applicants for major work in art?

We are discussing here that activity which in its more glorious moments has always, at least in the Western world, given the individual the opportunity for freedom of expression. This freedom, to be sure, has often been challenged, but never really been downed. At one time or another, as even today, the artist has been accused of anti-social heresies. But in retrospect he seems to have prophesied the shape of things to come, or at least been a very sensitive barometer of those movements and aspirations in a period which were progressive, ethical and vital.

We are, however, also discussing that activity which, in this country, has given very few of its practitioners an adequate livelihood, a position of social esteem or a role in the affairs of the community which it is just now beginning to do by admitting them to their academic faculties. Conversely and paradoxically, art in some form is practiced today by an enormous part of the population. Doctors, lawyers, dishwashers, housewives, members of symphony orchestras, business men, movie actresses, college presidents, pugilists, five star generals, steel workers and Prime Ministers, paint and even manage to get exhibitions of their work.

I submit that this spiraling interest in painting is caused by a growing anxiety over the curtailment of liberty in the life of a great industrial community. I am not so much speaking of the ever-present threat to political liberties, but of the freedom of individual expression, self-expression if you will, whose normal and traditional outlets have decreased alarmingly in a mechanized, over-specialized and managerialized society.

As the crafts are transformed into production-line industries, as the making of an object by a single individual is broken down into a series of specialized operations, the sense of joy and pride in accomplishment gives way to one of monotony and frustration. As in the professions the scope of each field is expanded through scientific and economic diversification, far beyond the ken of any single person, the specialist experiences a sense of atomistic detachment and futility, a realization of no longer being a healer of men or a guardian of justice, but merely a purveyor of routines. Similar anxieties manifest themselves among office workers, wives in the home and even farmers; feelings of insecurity and social discontinuity. The fact that, more often than not, most of these groups are well paid does not wholly

mitigate these frustrations, but merely gives them the wherewithal for shallow, canned recreation with its own potential of boredom and monotony, distracting rather than re-creating.

The adolescent who is the son or daughter of these people, and who is just beginning consciously to cut loose from parental ties, vaguely and yet acutely realizes the malady of our time. The arts attract him because there he can still be whole and free. And so he enrolls in a college art department, not necessarily unrealistic about his vocational prospects nor fully aware of making a bid for future sanity.

Here you have the main reasons for the amazing growth of the amateur artist in our days, and I dare say that the growth of art departments and art schools in the country is part of this movement. This itself is a phase of the industrial revolution of the last two hundred years, a phase we had better take very seriously. And it is infinitely sharpened when we consider another feature of this same historical situation and admit that modern art is with us to stay, or contemporary art as it is now called in our polished circles to pass over a famous gaffe pulled in the very cradle of liberty.

What then are we doing, in the face of this plight which I have somewhat oversketched, but which must remain the concern of the art educator? To answer this requires a look at the general situation in higher education as it has been shaped by the recent past, and in it, by the dialectic which has risen from John Dewey's antithesis to the old school.

The former idea of raising gentlemen and scholars can no longer be maintained because of the increasing democratization of the academic population, the larger percentage of which has to look to a gainful occupation immediately or soon after graduation. This has resulted in ever growing demands for terminal professional training. Colleges certainly, and universities to a large degree, would be selling their birthright for a mess of slumgullion, if they gave in lightly to this uninstructed demand. They have done just that in the pre-medical and pre-engineering fields. But on the whole they realize that the specialized requirements of most highly paid modern jobs can only be learned either on the job or in special schools. They have also understood that, to do prominent work in many of those positions, requires a grasp of their historical, social, scientific and technical interrelations with other subjects. This in turn asks for nimble, cultivated minds and imaginations. The schools have compromised between the gentlemanly scholar and the job-seeker, by maintaining a fair modicum of the *education* in the liberal arts and of pre-professional *training* in a major field. But, where the gentleman could be offered a series of worthy courses in several academic disciplines,

in the expectation that he himself achieve synthesis of his knowledge in a somewhat leisurely atmosphere, the contemporary job-seeker who enters a life of high speed and high tensions after school must be treated to something vastly different.

It seems to me that all subjects taught in a liberal arts program today must be a direct means of attaining the goal of a clear-cut educational policy. Its aim should be to persuade the student, through consideration of concrete subject matter, to switch over, from his habitually emotional traffic with ideas, events and facts, to the less customary and much harder, detached, thoughtful and critical approach. This requires the application of the intellect to logical thinking processes, to careful habits of reading and observation, and to sound methods of inquiry. At the same time his imaginative processes, far from being stifled, should be cultivated by a constant challenge to see relationships between facts, events, values and himself. He must learn to test the validity of his understanding by reflection and action. He must become aware of the assumptions and premises behind the behavior of his society. He must become particularly conscious of the relativity of these premises in reference to time and space. This should make him capable of understanding the behavior of other strata or ethnic groups in his surroundings, founded on somewhat different premises, as well as, ultimately that of other entirely foreign societies and of other historical periods. And he should then be able to act intelligently and humanely upon such comprehension, within his chosen field and as a citizen. I suppose that the present state of the world makes it needless for me to spell out the reasons for these requirements.

This is probably a fair representation of the points of more or less common agreement. The disagreements would have to do with particular contents and sequences of curricula and, from our angle here, with the position of the arts within them.

The arts are, of course—or shall we say could be—simply right for this education, and if I were for required courses—which I am not—I would make them so. In many places now the history of art is no longer begun with the survey, table-of-content kind of thing, equipment for dinner table talk of the cultured person, dealing with the facts of the internal technical developments of art down the ages, and serving as preparation for the professional detective game of authentication to establish the *monetary* value of an object, without extracting its *humanistic* values. Instead of this, the course is used today to confront students with works of their own culture, first to develop the sensibilities necessary to inspect any work of art, and the intellectual faculties needed to appraise the results of such close scrutiny.

The student, temperamentally modern, but environmentally thirty years behind, is faced here with that relativity of standards of value or beauty, their psychological and philosophic implications, and must, if not change his mind, at least amplify it. Going on then to other periods or to different cultures further enlarges his experience in the protean character of human creativeness and the multiplicity of beliefs and behaviors. The historical understanding engendered by this deep and broad grasp of social and imaginative values of the work of art might suggest the rather intriguing possibility of a senior, rather than freshman survey course, conjuring up not a skeleton but a full body of art with all the appurtenances of life.

Here the student also proceeds from rudimentary to more advanced habits of sound criticism which are augmented in the studio courses. Reasoned assessment of his own work is elicited from him under the teacher's guidance and makes him gradually aware of the fact, immensely important in all human activities, even in government and in college administration, that all but the most elementary techniques are fundamentally not teachable. I know that this idea is contrary to cherished beliefs. But since technique by its very structure reveals the thing it is destined to make, every new or fresh concept in art must create its own technique.

In the studio the novice is allowed to improvise his technique to suit what he thinks is most his own, unique and original creation. He soon finds out that he has been scooped a generation ago and that he has ancestors whom he cannot disavow and with whom he might as well converse. Here too, if he be the one who considers himself creative rather than scholarly, he begins to see the value of a tradition well understood and if he has spunk will sit again with the art historian, just as the historical student must, somewhere along the line, become too curious about the problems of artistic creation to stay away from the studio.

At this juncture I might offer a few words directed primarily to trustees, presidents, and deans. Studio teaching at its best has always developed the ability to make effective decisions of a formal nature within a system of thought—esthetic, religious, ethical, social—and to make these decisions explicitly through a skill and a technique. These are decisions toward continuous action and production, based on feeling, thought, knowledge and conviction. To equip students with these bases of sound action linked with sound reflection, requires development of his whole spiritual and intellectual personality, understanding of his environment and of a large part of its historical and philosophic backgrounds. This is more than can be said about the majority of the academic disciplines. And in this western world, so enamored of action for its own sake and rather suspicious of reflection, this

way of teaching the arts might be a palliative, strong doses of which could be taken with impunity. It is also a justification for art in colleges and for William Kilpatrick's often grossly misunderstood postulate of learning by doing.

I have dealt in my remarks mainly with art education in colleges and universities within whose precincts normally exist the facilities for carrying out these aims and ideals, of course with the cooperation of all other departments. Their graduate schools should naturally be open only to the most highly qualified students, certainly in the arts. Only they can live up to the requirements of a devoted carrying out of such programs. The number of untalented and intellectually ill-equipped candidates for teaching positions, flooding the country, with graduate degrees in their hands, is rapidly becoming a scandal, especially when, at a guess, only one out of five has any chance of finding an opening.

About the lower schools whose graduates come into our classes I have little to say, except that their teachers are on the whole poorly oriented toward such a program as I have outlined and which is no longer just in the blueprint stage. Whether this means that courses in art education have to be revamped or completely abandoned, I don't know because of my slight acquaintance with the formalized education of educators. Whatever it be, I should say that to teach art in the studio we must have artists, not necessarily great ones, but certainly Kleinmeister, with the emphasis on Meister. That they must be deeply educated, especially for high school teaching, goes without saying.

The art school proper exists in so many forms and shapes that it is hard to appraise them without holding a Guggenheim fellowship to do it. Most of the ones I know are staffed often with good artists, not so often with highly educated ones, and rarely with those who would ask their students occasionally to read a book. There are, however, some schools which in a non-academic fashion live up to, and even go in some ways beyond the universities.

In closing I would like to return to the revolutionary motif. We are not at the end of a revolution, politically, economically or intellectually. We are in the midst of it. In the arts the peak phases have come with accelerated frequency. The Baroque rebellion, the Romantic movement, the Realist-Impressionist beginning of modern art, Cézanne's and Seurat's defections, the Symbolist, Fauvist and Cubist upheavals, and finally the series of movements winding up in the last namable one of Surrealism. You know your chronology and see what I mean.

We cannot, and must not, become emigres idolizing the wonder and

the plunder of a more comfortable past to which there is no return and which we can only see with contemporary and, I hope, young eyes. Revolutions, ladies and gentlemen, are not really made by the malcontents who make them, but by the despair rising from the internal weaknesses inherent in any human system of thought or action. Each one of them, after the exhaustion of its positive values, shows its seamy side and is bound to break down, no matter what props the old guard attempts to shove under it. This happened to Newtonian mechanics, not so long ago, possibly not entirely to man's detriment. But we cannot run away from it even by moving to the country. The revolution in education, not utterly disconnected with those others, is not really discouraging in its perspectives, and should be a challenge and a tilting ground for those of us who still like exertion and adventure.

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THE FILM AS AN ORIGINAL ART FORM

By Hans Richter

THE main esthetic problem in the movies, which were invented for reproduction (of movement) is, paradoxically, the overcoming of reproduction. In other words the question is: to what degree is the camera (film, color, sound, etc.) developed and used to reproduce (any object which appears before the lens) or to produce (sensations not possible in any other art medium)?

This question is by no means a purely technical or mechanical one. The technical liberation of the camera, is intimately inter-related with psychological, social, economic and esthetic problems. They all play a role in deciding to what use technique is put and how much it is "liberated." Before this fundamental matter with its manifold implications, is sufficiently cleared up it is impossible to speak of the film as an independent art form, even as an art form at all, whatever its promises might be. In the words of Pudovkin: "What is a work of art *before* it comes in front of the camera, such as acting, staging or the novel is not a work of art *on* the screen."

Even to the sincere lover of the film in its present form it must seem that the film is overwhelmingly used for keeping "records" of creative achievements: of plays, actors, novels or just plain nature, and proportionally less for the creation of original filmic sensations. It is true, the commercial entertainment film uses many of the "liberating" elements, discovered since 1895 by Meliès, Griffith, Eisenstein and others, leading towards an original cinematic form. But the general tendency of the film industry, as an economic institution, is the distribution of each film to a maximum number of people. This institution has to avoid it to move away from the traditional forms of story-telling to which the maximum number of people are conditioned: the theater, with the supremacy of the actor—and the novel or the play, with the writer. Both traditions weigh heavily upon the film and prevent it from coming into its own.

David Ward Griffith forced the stage actor, as early as 1909, into mosaic-acting, and broke-up, in that way, the uninterrupted scene-acting of the stage actor into hundreds of separately acted scenes which assumed continuity only in the cutting room. His innovation of the close-up and the cross-

cutting of simultaneous events were revolutionary steps towards a filmic style. But when he broke with theater-acting he gave, involuntarily, an overwhelming influence back to the actor in the creation of the star. As "Star" the actor immortalized reproduction and dominated the film form once again.

The novel on the other hand has adapted itself in the last 50 years to the film. It has become increasingly image-minded. But its technique of psychological character-development, its style of storytelling, traditional property of literature, dominates the film and makes it also, from this side, reproduction (of literary works, which were original art before they were "produced" in Hollywood, London, Paris and Rome).

It does not concern us here that, in spite of dependency upon other art forms, and in spite of the greater or smaller degree of reproduction, many films have shown exceptional qualities. It is known that the film industry has produced fascinating works, full of inventiveness, inspiration and human values. The problem with which we are dealing here is the film as an original art form. "Good" or "bad" have no meaning as long as it is not clear upon what esthetic fundamentals the film is supposed to be built.

The uncertainty of whether "film as such" (i.e. the entertainment film) is essentially theatrical, literary, or fine-art, ends with the doubt in the minds of many sincere film historians and critics as to whether the film is, or ever will be, an original art at all! There is also another school of thought which defies the present form of the film altogether, in spite of its overwhelming success and powerful influence, rejects its value as social compensator in offering paradises, complete with gods and goddesses, and sees in it a grandiose perversion of the medium.

Between the two schools I would prefer to say that the fictional film in its present form is a reproduction of several art forms mixed with original cinematographic elements. But the fact is that there are at least two film forms besides the fictional film, which, less spectacular than Hollywood, are more cinematographic in the proper sense of the word.

Several times in the history of the movies a revolt has temporarily broken the hold of the two traditional arts over the entertainment film. To state the two most important revolts: the post-revolutionary silent Russian film (*Potemkin*), and after the liberation of Italy from Fascism the post-war Italian film (*Paisan*). In both cases the fictional film has turned from fiction to history and from theater style to documentary style in the use of natural setting, people not actors, and real events.

With the documentary approach the film gets back to its fundamentals. Here it has a solid esthetic basis: in the free use of nature, including man,

as raw material. By selection, elimination and coordination of natural elements, a film form evolves which is original and not bound by theatrical or literary tradition. That goes of course, as much for the semi-documentary fictional film (*Potemkin, Paisan*), as for the documentary film itself. These elements might obtain a social, economic, political, general human meaning according to their selection and coordination. But this meaning does not exist *a priori* in the facts, nor is it a reproduction (as in an actor's performance). It is created in the camera and the cutting room. The documentary film is an original art form. It has come to grips with facts—on its own original level. It covers the *rational* side of our lives, from the scientific experiment to the poetic landscape-study, but never moves away from the factual. Its scope is wide. Nevertheless, it is an original art form only as far as it keeps strictly to the use of natural raw material in rational interpretation. The modern, more convenient technique of *re-enacting* factual scenes and events is sometimes not without setbacks, as it might easily introduce reproduction through the back door again: in reproducing enacted scenes.

The influence of the documentary film is growing but its contribution to a filmic art is, by nature, limited. It is limited by the same token by which it has overcome the influence of the two old arts. Since its elements are facts, it can be original art only in the limits of this factuality. Any free use of the magic, poetic, irrational qualities to which the film medium might offer itself would have to be excluded *a priori* (as nonfactual). But just these qualities are essentially cinematographic, are characteristic of the film and are, esthetically, the ones which promise future development. That is where the second of the original film-forms has its place: the experimental film.

There is a short chapter in the history of the movies which dealt especially with this side of the film. It was made by individuals concerned essentially with the film medium. They were neither prejudiced by production clichés, nor by necessity of rational interpretation, nor by financial obligations. The story of these individual artists, at the beginning of the twenties, under the name of *avantgarde*, can be properly read as a history of the conscious attempt to overcome reproduction and to arrive at the free use of the means of cinematographic expression. This movement spread over Europe and was sustained for the greatest part by modern painters who, in their own field, had broken away from the conventional: Eggeling, Léger. Duchamp, Man Ray, Picabia, Ruttman, Bruguère, Len Lye, Cocteau, myself and others.

The fact that it was nearly exclusively modern artists who represented this movement gives a hint of the direction in which the "liberation" of the film was sought. Already, in the 1910's, Canudo and Delluc in France spoke

of "photogenic" as the new "plastic" quality of the film medium. René Clair went further and declared film as a visual medium *per se*: "A blind man in a regular theater and a deaf mute in a movie theater should still get the essentials from the performance." The spoken word for the stage, the silent image for the film—those are the elements!

These artists discovered that film as a visual medium fitted into the tradition of the art without violation of its fundamentals. It was there that it could develop freely: "The film should positively avoid any connection with the historical, educational, romantic, moral, or immoral, geographic or documentary subjects. The film should become, step by step, finally exclusively cinematography, that means that it should use exclusively photogenic elements" (Jean Epstein, 1923). Problems in modern art lead directly into the film. Organization and orchestration of form, color, the dynamics of motion, simultaneity, were problems with which Cézanne, the cubists, the futurists had to deal. Eggeling and I came directly out of the structural problems of abstract art, *nolens-volens* into the film medium. The connection to theater and literature was, completely, severed. Cubism, expressionism, dadaism, abstract art, surrealism found not only their expression in films but *a new fulfilment on a new level*.

The tradition of modern art grew on a large front, logically, together with and into the film: the orchestration of motion in visual rhythms—the plastic expression of an object in motion under varying light conditions, "to create the rhythm of common objects in space and time, to present them in their plastic beauty, this seemed to me worthwhile" (Léger),—The distortion and dissection of a movement, an object or a form and its reconstruction in cinematic terms (just as the cubists dissected and rebuilt in pictorial terms)—the denaturalization of the object in any form to recreate it cinematographically with light—light with its transparency and airiness as a poetic, dramatic, constructive material—the use of the magic qualities of the film to create the original state of the dream,—the complete liberation from the conventional story and its chronology in dadaist and surrealist developments in which the object is taken out of its conventional context and is put into new relationships, creating in that way a new content altogether. "The external object has broken away from its habitual environment. Its component parts had liberated themselves from the object in such a way that they could set up entirely new relationships with other elements"—André Breton (about Max Ernst).

The "external object" was used, as in the documentary film, as raw material, but instead of employing it for a *rational* theme of social, economic,

scientific nature), it has "broken away" from its habitual environment and was used as material to express *irrational* visions. Films like "Ballet Mecanique," "Entr'acte," "Emak Bakia," "Ghosts Before Breakfast," "Andalusian Dog," "Diagonal Symphony," "Anaemic Cinéma," "Blood of a Poet," "Dreams That Money Can Buy" and many others were not repeatable in any other medium and are essentially cinematic.

It is still too early to speak of a tradition, or of a style, comparable to those in older arts. The movement is still too young. There are, nevertheless, general traceable directions which cover a great deal of these efforts: abstract art and surrealism. Here in the U.S. is the work of the Whitney brothers and Frances Lee, the most characteristic of the one; the films of Curtiss Harrington, Major Deven, and Frank Stanfather are examples of the other. There are many serious attempts but also many "followers" who use and abuse the sensations easily obtainable in this medium. Especially surrealism seems to offer a welcome excuse for the exhibition of a whole menu of inhibitions.

In England, France, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, experimental film groups of individual artists, mostly painters, have taken up the work begun by the *avantgarde* of the twenties. They are following the only realistic line which an artist can follow: artistic integrity. In that way a tradition, temporarily interrupted by the stormy political events in Europe has been taken up by a young generation, here and abroad. It is obvious today that this tradition will not be eradicated again but will grow. As small or as big as this movement might become, it has opened a new road to film as an art-form and has, as such, more than mere historical significance.

The stronger and more independent the documentary and the experimental film become and the more the general audience has occasion to see them, the more they will adapt themselves to a "screen-style" instead of a theater-style. Only after such a "transformation" of the general audience has taken place, the entertainment film can and will follow. At such golden times film entertainment and film-art might become identical.

A REPORT ON PENDING PH.D. THESES IN ART HISTORY

By Alan Gowans

IN SEPTEMBER 1950, the COLLEGE ART JOURNAL began a survey of Ph.D. theses in the field of art history which have been presented since January 1950, or are now in progress, with the aim of establishing a permanent file of work done on the Ph.D. level. The advantages of such a source of reference are obvious, of course, not only immediately, but increasingly as time goes by. Its most immediate service should be to scholars beginning work on the Ph.D. level, in avoiding duplication and overlapping of research. In the future, the availability in published form of a file of Ph.D. work accomplished should prove of great value in guiding interested persons to unpublished research otherwise liable to be overlooked.

The present report covers replies received up to November 1, 1950, to the survey questionnaires sent out by the COLLEGE ART JOURNAL. The file has been organized in so far as possible with the basic aim of readiest accessibility for reference. Only the broadest classifications have been made at the present time, but the set-up allows of much more detailed subdivision in the future, as the file grows.

The institution noted in parentheses following each author's name is that with which he was affiliated at the time the report was sent in; the institution to which the work is to be submitted follows the title. A date in parentheses indicates a proposed date for submitting a thesis; out of parentheses, the date actually submitted. The remarks are those made by individual authors on their reports.

A. GENERAL STUDIES

I. LITERARY CRITICISM

1. Quentin Maule (U. Chicago), "Criticism of Raphael and Michelangelo during the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries." To U. Chicago (1953).
2. Thomas H. Hamilton (Monmouth Coll., Monmouth, Ill.), "Bocchi's Treatise on Donatello's St. George." To U. Chicago (1953).
3. Lincoln Rothschild (New York U.), "Style in Art: Principles of Analysis based on the polar categories of Heinrich Wölfflin." To New York U. (Spring 1951). "This thesis attempts to interpret Wölfflin's categories and the dynamics of their evolution in terms of human personality and its social background."
4. Charles P. Parkhurst (Oberlin College, Ohio), "Seventeenth-century color theories." To Princeton U.

II. TECHNIQUES AND STYLE

1. Hal Wilmeth (U. Nebraska), "Techniques of Italian Renaissance Painting." To U. Chicago (1953).
 2. Robert Lloyd Cantor (W.Va. Inst. of Tech., Montgomery, W.Va.), "Plastics as an art medium from early man until today." To New York U. (August 1951).
 3. Olga Demas (U. Chicago), "Parallel development of painting and sculpture in Europe from 1230 to 1500." To U. Chicago (1952).
 4. William Tallon (U. Chicago), "Perspective in contemporary art." To U. Chicago (1954).
- See also A.I.3; B.X.iv.3.

B. PARTICULAR STUDIES

I. PREHISTORIC AND PRIMITIVE

1. Lez L. Haas (U. New Mexico), "Development of some geometric motifs on Rio Grande painted pottery." To U. California, Berkeley (1954).

II. ANCIENT (*Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, etc.*)

1. Robert A. Laurer (U. Colorado), "Temple of Assos, Asia Minor." To Harvard U. (Jan. 1952). "The sculptures of the temple, their relation to the architecture, and iconographic relationships of the sculptures with other sculpture and painting of ancient Greece."

III. EARLY MEDIAEVAL (*Early Christian, Byzantine, etc., to ca. 1100*)

1. Shoger Baghdoyan (U. Chicago), "Armenian Manuscripts." To U. Chicago (1953).
2. Frances J. Niederer (Hollins Coll., Va.), "The Roman Diaconiae: a study of the use of ancient buildings by the Catholic Church up to 806 A.D." To New York U. (1951).
3. Paul Kelpé (U. Texas, Austin), "Irish Antiquities in the possession of the Chicago Museum of Natural History." To U. Chicago (1953).
4. Mary L. Heuser (Barnard Coll., N.Y.), "A Study of Gestures and their meaning in early mediaeval art." To Radcliffe College (Summer 1951). "My preliminary work has established about six main types of gestures, which with their variations and combinations can be traced in differing degrees of frequency and popularity from antiquity through the period under consideration (ca. 300-1050 A.D.). I propose to discuss the changes in meaning which occur during these centuries in relation to the main traditions of early mediaeval art."
5. William S. A. Dale (National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa), "English Ivories of the 11th and 12th centuries." To Harvard U. (1951).

IV. HIGH MEDIAEVAL (*approx. 1100-1300 A.D.*)

See A.II.3; B.III.5.

V. FOURTEENTH CENTURY

VI. FIFTEENTH CENTURY

i. Italy

1. Marvin J. Eisenberg (U. Michigan, Ann Arbor), "Lorenzo Monaco and the International Gothic in Florence, ca. 1390-1425." To Princeton U. (June 1952).

See also A.I.2; A.II.1.

ii. *Spain and Portugal.*

iii. *Northern Europe*

1. Robert A. Koch (Princeton U.) "The Sculpture of the west façade of Saint-Maurice at Vienne." To Princeton U. (1951). Covers period ca. 1385-1485. Article from thesis: *Art Bulletin*, XXXII, 2, pp. 151-155.
2. William A. McCloy (U. Manitoba, Winnipeg), "A psychological study of the life and work of Hugo van der Goes." To State U. Iowa (August 1951).
3. (Mrs.) Joy C. Levy, "Space-construction in the Master of Flémalle and Roger van der Weyden." To Radcliffe College, June 1950.

VII. SIXTEENTH CENTURY

i. *Italy*

1. William P. Campbell (Harvard U.), "Domenico Fancelli, Sculptor." To Harvard U. (February 1951).
2. Creighton Gilbert (U. Louisville, Ky.), "The works of Girolamo Savoldo." To New York U. Articles from thesis: "Milan and Savoldo," *Art Bulletin*, 1945; "Apocrifa ritrattistica savoldesca," *Arte Veneta*, 1949; "Savoldo's drawings put to use," to appear in *Tietze Festschrift*; "Carmelite commissions of the Renaissance: Pietro Lorenzetti to Savoldo," lecture summary in *Institute of Fine Arts News*, 1946; "Per i Savoldo visti dal Vasari," paper to be delivered by proxy at Convegno Internazionale Vasariano, Florence, 1950, and published in its report.
3. David R. Coffin (Princeton U.), "Pirro Ligorio." To Princeton U. (1951). See also A.I.2; A.I.1; A.II.1.

VIII. SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

i. *America*

1. Alan Gowans (Rutgers U., N.J.), "Church Architecture in New France, 1608-1760." To Princeton U., February 1950.

ii. *England*

iii. *Flanders*

iv. *France*

1. Francis H. Dowley (U. Chicago), "French Allegorical Portraits in the 17th and 18th centuries." To U. Chicago (1952).

v. *Germany*

vi. *Holland*

1. Seymour Slive (Oberlin College, Ohio), "Seventeenth-century Dutch painting." To U. Chicago (1952).

IX. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

i. *America*

1. Joseph A. Baird, Jr. (U. Toronto, Ont.), "The retablo in 18th century Mexico and Spain (Portugal), with a consideration of retablo-façades." To Harvard U. (1951). "A study of the development of various styles (e.g. 'Queretard' and 'Estipite' styles in Mexico), with attention to relation of special schools in Spain and Mexico. Emphasis on origins and use of ornamental motifs. Catalogue of principal monuments."
 2. Helmut von Erffa (Rutgers U., N.J.), "The drawings of Benjamin West." To Princeton U.
- See also B.VIII.1.1.

ii. England

1. Edward A. Maser (U. Chicago), "Patch and Hugford." To U. Chicago (1953).
2. Pauline Grace King (U. Chicago), "Thomas Stothard and the development toward Victorian Romanticism." To U. Chicago (1950).
3. Charles Edward Buckley (Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D.C.), "Joseph Wright of Derby." To Harvard U. (1952).

iii. Flanders

iv. France

1. Thomas P. Baird (Princeton U.), "Servandoni." To Princeton U. (1952).

See also B.VIII.iv.1.

v. Germany

vi. Holland

vii. Italy

viii. Spain and Portugal

1. Eileen Angelin Lord (Manhattanville College, N.Y.), "Luis Salvador Carmona, Sculptor." To New York U. (1952).

X. NINETEENTH CENTURY

i. America

1. Abbott Lowell Cummings (Antioch College, Ohio), "An investigation of the sources, stylistic evolution, and influence of Asher Benjamin's builders' guide." To Ohio State U., August 1950. "The study was only indirectly biographical. Current investigation of Benjamin's life and work is being carried on by Edward Caswell Perry, librarian, Framingham, Mass."
2. Paul F. Norton (Penn State College, Pa.), "Jefferson, Latrobe, and the National Capitol." To Princeton U. (September 1951).
3. Louise Hall (Duke U., N.C.), "American Architecture 1789-1865: Trade or Profession?" To Radcliffe College, Mass. (1953). "Concerns the evolution of architecture as a profession in this country to the foundation of the American Institute of Architects and the establishment of the first professional school."
4. Robert B. Schaffer, "Charles Eliot Norton and Architecture." To Harvard U. (March 1951). "This study covers not only Norton's architectural thinking and activity, but to a limited degree that of his circle as well. It is to a certain extent an expansion of my 'Ruskin, Norton, and Memorial Hall,' *Harvard Library Bulletin*, III, 1949, pp. 213-231."
5. Bainbridge Bunting (U. New Mexico, Albuquerque), "Architectural History of the Back Bay in Boston, 1850-1917." To Harvard U. (Sept. 1951).
6. Ransom R. Patrick (Western Reserve U., Cleveland), "John Neagle, Portrait Painter." To Princeton U. (1951).
7. Joshua C. Taylor (U. Chicago), "William Page." To Princeton U. (1951).
8. Ruth Berenson Katz (Radcliffe College, Mass.), "John La Farge." To Radcliffe College (June 1951).

ii. England

See B.X.iv.1.

iv. France

1. Canio Radice (U. Chicago), "Géricault: British Influences on the aesthetic

- theory of Courbet and Proud'hon." To U. Chicago (1952).
2. Theodore Klitzke (U. Chicago), "Art Theory and Workshop Practise in France at the time of David and Ingres." To U. Chicago (1953).
3. Richard F. Brown (Frick Collection, N.Y.), "The color technique of Camille Pissarro." To Harvard U. (1951).

XI. TWENTIETH CENTURY

i. America

1. Hedley Howell Rhys (Swarthmore College, Pa.), "Maurice Prendergast: sources and development of his style." To Harvard U. (1951).
2. Adolph Joseph Karl (Florida State U.), "New York Realists, 1900-1913." To New York U. (1951-2). "This thesis is listed in the Whitney Museum and at N.Y.U. under the title: 'The so-called Ashcan School and the beginnings of social consciousness in American painting.'"

iv. France

1. Esther Huffman (U. Chicago), "Modigliani." To U. Chicago (1954).

v. Germany

1. Peter Selz (U. Chicago), "History of the Bauhaus." To U. Chicago (1952).

ix. Scandinavia

1. Isaac Peterson (U. Chicago), "Edvard Munch." To U. Chicago (1953).

XII. FAR EAST

1. Usher Parsons Coolidge (Art Inst., Chicago), "Chinese Buddhist Sculpture in the collection of the Fogg Museum, Cambridge." To Harvard U. (1951).
2. Harold Phillip Stern (Freer Gallery, Washington, D.C.), "The Question of Ukiyoe Painting." To U. Michigan (1952).

XIII. ISLAM

1. (Mrs.) Gulnar Kheirallah Bosch (Wesleyan College, Macon, Ga.), "Islamic Bookbindings of the twelfth to seventeenth centuries." To Oriental Institute, U. Chicago (November 1950). "This dissertation is based on Arabic, Persian, and Turkish sources. In addition, the collection of leather Islamic bookbindings in the Oriental Institute is analysed."

MARVIN C. ROSS, Curator of Mediaeval and Subsequent Decorative Arts at The Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, Maryland, is working on Richard Caton Woodville, Sr. (1825-55), the *American* genre painter. Many of Woodville's paintings have disappeared and cannot be traced. Any assistance in locating paintings and drawings by the artist and manuscript material about him and letters from him will be greatly appreciated.

CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTS

A SMALL BIOGRAPHY

By Louis Bosa

LOUIS BOSA, age 45, 5 feet, 2 inches, black eyes, black hair and black mustache. My body is longer from the waist up and I have very short legs. That's what makes me so strong. I'm a specimen of the Mediterranean. The question is always asked about the people in my pictures, "Why do they have such small feet, and so graceful?" It's really an inheritance. During a visit to my native country this summer, I noticed that in my particular section of Italy, they all had small feet. Through my research and great discovery, they have been on the run for so many centuries from invaders as far back as Attila the Hun, Turks, et cetera, that they have developed a tiny foot so that they could run faster. I have also discovered that where there is a small foot, there isn't as much balance and that is why perhaps I am not so well balanced. That is my foot story.

Now about my art career. I got my first commission as a painter in America because I weighed only 110 pounds and was five feet two. The job was assisting a house painter who was too fat to climb up to the roof tops. That was in Buffalo, New York, where I had come from my native Udine in Italy in 1923. Being the son of a stone carver, I had earned my own living in Italy by bicycle riding and designing wrought iron. However, when my employer sent me to museums to look for design ideas, I found myself spending most of my time copying paintings instead. So, I decided to become a painter and further decided that New York was the best place to learn how to paint. I still think so.

My first job in New York City, when I arrived alone after a few months in Buffalo, was as an interpreter in the Pennsylvania Hotel. I looked like a general in my uniform. Unfortunately, my first customers were a family from the south of Italy and I could not understand their accent. Off came the uniform and into the street went Bosa. I have always been interested in the silly, human things people do. I play detective all the time and pretend the people don't see me while I watch them. Sometimes I get so excited that I go up and talk to the people I'm watching and that usually spoils the whole idea. I guess I see things exaggerated. I see big noses, small chins, beady eyes,

pointed rabbit ears, squatty cauliflower ears, no hair, too much hair—always I see delicate feet.

My teaching methods naturally reflect my own painting practices. I prefer advanced students and am always telling them to observe, observe, observe. I want them first to be aware of everything and then to select for their pictures the subject and the types of people that suit them. I tell them not to sit in their studios and think up ideas, but to go to where the ideas are, then to put them together in the studio. A scene just as it is, never turns out right. It is apt to be conventional and uninteresting. It has to be dramatized but not over-dramatized. In a picture, you must never tell the whole story. Part of the story must be hidden but you must get the mood.

People ask about my method of painting and how many brushes I use. I use three brushes—a big one, a medium one and a small one. I tone my canvasses down with burnt sienna and then wipe it off to take off the glare of the white canvas. When the canvas is toned down and a little greyed, there is a sense of mystery in it. Then I draw with charcoal and frequently, on large compositions where there are lots of figures, go over the charcoal with India ink and a pen. If the painting looks right just with an outline, your big problem is over. Of course, when you begin to paint, then your big problem really begins, because you now have to think of the color, the mood and many other things that are involved. When I start to apply color, I get very excited and emotionally moved. I feel as though I am in the actual spot drawing the scene. I get into such a state of mind that I can remember all the sounds, all the movements around me and silly conversations being held by people (I don't know why I should remember them) and also the smell of the place, which is very important. And the most important thing is, to be inspired by the subject and moved by it.

If you find, while painting a canvas, that you begin to yawn and feel a little fatigued, stop working and go right out of the studio and take a walk. Hide your canvas for a while because you can become blind over your own work and lose interest.

The question is always asked why I paint nuns and priests. The answer is that I love the interesting shapes and moods they can create on a canvas. Moreover, there is the sheer love of black. I am not trying to ridicule or make fun of any religion. If the paintings have a sense of humor I can't help it since it is one of my natural traits. During my visit to Europe this summer, I discovered six cousins who were all priests and two more in this country. In my painting, "The Blessing of the Fleet," the Bishop has a red nose. "Why a red nose?" I was asked. I needed it to balance other colors

which were essential in the painting. In a recent painting entitled "Gloria," which is based on an Italian Procession in the East Side district of New York, there were two impressions involved. The first impression was at night. The music was playing the Italian Tarentello and everyone was dancing in the street. It was quite a jamboree and a sort of bazaar-like affair, which bothered me. I decided to go again the next morning. When I arrived, it was very early and they were taking down the altar. That was the thing that actually moved me, for as they were taking it down, a crowd, including myself, had formed in the street to watch them. There were men in the front lifting a symbol of a cross, but it was not a cross, it was just a two-by-four. People have criticized this painting, saying that the fire escape on which some of the people are standing could not actually support their weight. I did this purposely to create friction and unrest, as well as a certain movement. . . .

People have the right not to like one type of painting or another. I feel that art is nothing but self-expression. Therefore, if a person is not moved by it, it is not his fault. Everyone reacts differently to all kinds of paintings. So, if someone doesn't like my work, he has the right to say so. You see, I don't like beans, so I don't eat them. Therefore, artists should never get angry when a certain Mr. or Mrs. doesn't like his work. Anyway, there is room for all types of art, Modern, Conservative, Humorous, Middle-of-the-Road. All have their own clients and admirers. There are two kinds of art, good and bad. If I go on any further with this thing, my head will split, and then I'll really be off balance. Remember, after all, that I am just a humble painter with a twisted eye.

JACQUES LIPCHITZ,
Courtesy Portland Art Museum.





Henri Matisse

HENRI MATISSE, courtesy of Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., New York.

TENTATIVE PROGRAM FOR THE 39TH ANNUAL MEETING, COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

WASHINGTON, D.C., JANUARY 29-30-31, 1951

Monday, January 29, 1951

Morning

8:30-12:00

Registration. Convention Lobby, Hotel Statler

9:30-11:30

Concurrent sessions, Hotel Statler.

1. INTER-RELATIONS OF LITERATURE AND ART. South American Room.
Speakers: Frederick Hard, President of Scripps College; George Boas, Johns Hopkins; R. P. Blackmur, Princeton.
Chairman: Creighton Gilbert, University of Louisville.
2. CREATIVE ART IN COLLEGES. Federal Room.
Speakers: Philip Guston, painter, New York University; Ernst Mundt, sculptor, California School of Fine Arts; Leo Steppat, sculptor, Indiana University; Robert Motherwell, painter, New York.
Chairman: Douglas MacAgy, Orbit Films.

Noon

12:00-2:00

Luncheon Meetings.

1. For joint members of CAA and American Society of Aesthetics.
Chairman: Huntington Cairns of the National Gallery. (For information on all luncheon meetings, communicate in advance with respective chairmen and register with luncheon meeting clerk at CAA registration desk.)

Afternoon

2:00-4:30

Concurrent sessions.

1. MODERN SCULPTURE, Corcoran Gallery Auditorium.
Speakers: J. J. Sweeney, critic, New York; Lincoln Kirstein, critic, New York; Bernard Myers, art historian, New York; Clement Greenberg, critic, New York; Helmut Lehmann-Haupt, Columbia University.
Chairman: Gibson Danes, Ohio State University.
2. MEDIEVAL ART, Dumbarton Oaks Auditorium.
Speakers: Hugo Buchta, Dumbarton Oaks; Dmitri Tselos, University of Minnesota; Helmut Schlunk, Dumbarton Oaks; Sumner McK. Crosby, Yale University; Wolfgang Seiferth, Howard University.
Chairman: Perry B. Cott, National Gallery of Art.
3. SOURCE MATERIALS IN WASHINGTON FOR THE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES. Coolidge Auditorium, Library of Congress. (Society of Architectural Historians program.)
Welcome by Luther H. Evans, Library of Congress.
Speakers: Louis A. Simon, F.A.I.A.; Leicester B. Holland, Miami University; Thomas C. Vint, National Park Service; Paul Vanderbilt, Library of Congress.
Chairman: Thomas C. Vint.

5:00

Reception at the Octagon House by the officers of the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings. (SAH members only)

Evening

8:00-10:00

SAH Session, Hotel Statler, Federal Room.

ARCHITECTURE OUTSIDE THE U.S.A.

Speakers: Marion D. Ross, University of Oregon; Paul Zucker, Cooper Union; Nicolas E. Chotes, University of Florida; Turpin C. Bannister, University of Illinois; Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Smith College

Chairman: Carroll L. V. Meeks, Yale University.

The Phillips Memorial Gallery, 1600 21st Street, will be open to members and guests this evening.

Tuesday, January 30, 1951

Morning

9:30-11:30

Concurrent sessions.

1. RENAISSANCE ART, National Gallery Auditorium.

Speakers: H. W. Janson, New York University; Clarence Kennedy, Smith College; William J. Young, Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Chairman: Charles Seymour, Jr., Yale University.

2. ORIENTAL ART, Freer Gallery Auditorium.

Speakers: Archibald Gibson Wenley, Freer Gallery; John A. Pope, Freer Gallery; Robert Treet Paine, Jr., Boston Museum; Benjamin Rowland, Jr., Harvard University; Alexander C. Soper, Bryn Mawr College; Aschwin Lippe, Metropolitan Museum.

3. THE FUNCTION OF ART IN GENERAL EDUCATION, Corcoran Gallery Auditorium.

A special program sponsored by the American University, Washington, D.C.

Speakers: Robin Bond, American University; Jack Tworckov, artist, New York; Robert Motherwell, artist, New York; Arne Randall, U. S. Office of Education.

Chairman: Robin Bond.

Noon

12:00-2:00

Luncheon Meetings:

1. College Art Museums.

Chairman: John Coolidge, Fogg Museum of Art, Harvard University.

2. Regional College Art Societies.

Chairman: Justus Bier, University of Louisville and President of the Mid-western College Art Conference.

Afternoon

2:00-4:30

Concurrent sessions.

1. MODERN ART, Corcoran Gallery Auditorium.

Speakers: Klaus Berger, University of Kansas City; Kenneth Lindsay, Williams College; Richard Sisson, Institute of Fine Arts; Clifford Amyx, University of Kentucky; Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Museum of Modern Art; Leslie Check, Richmond Museum of Art; Frederick Wight, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston.

Chairman: Gibson Danes, Ohio State University.

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2. THE GRAPHIC ARTS. A program including papers on fine prints, gallery talk on the Vollard Show and related exhibitions at the Folger, Library of Congress (Print Division), and National Museum (Division of Graphic Arts). There will also be a demonstration of contemporary processes of print making.

Speakers: To be announced.

Chairman: Ray Nash, Dartmouth College.

5:30-7:00

Business Meeting, Hotel Statler, Federal Room.

In addition to annual reports, several important items of new business will be introduced. Members wishing to introduce material at the Business Meeting should communicate in advance with the President or the Business Manager.

Evening

7:00-8:00

Cocktails, Hotel Statler, Federal Room.

To be served immediately after the Business Meeting.

8:00-10:00

Annual Banquet, Hotel Statler.

Guest of Honor: Professor Charles Rufus Morey.

FILM PROGRAM: *La Rosa et le Reseda*; *Guernica*; *Le Charme de l'existence*.

Tickets to the banquet are \$5.00 (including service, taxes and film program) and should be purchased, if possible, in advance.

Wednesday, January 31, 1951

Morning

9:30-11:30

Concurrent Sessions.

1. FILM PROGRAM AND ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION. National Gallery Auditorium.

Films: From five to six short films (among them Rubens, *Le Monde de Paul Delvaux*, Lascaux, etc.) will be presented and followed by a critical discussion.

Participants: H. W. Janson, New York University; Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Museum of Modern Art, Helen Franc, *Magazine of Art*; Arthur Knight, Film Institute of the City College of New York.

Chairman: George Amberg, Museum of Modern Art.

2. PROBLEMS IN TRAINING MUSEUM STAFF LECTURERS, National Gallery of Art, Board Room.

A round table discussion with the following participants: Sterling A. Callisen, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Thomas Munro, Cleveland Museum; Raymond S. Stites, National Gallery.

Chairman: Sterling A. Callisen.

Noon

12:00-2:00

Luncheon Meetings:

1. Editorial Board of the *Art Bulletin*.

Chairman: Wolfgang Stechow, Editor-in-Chief of the *Art Bulletin*.

Afternoon

2:00-4:30

Concurrent Sessions.

1. AMERICAN ART, Corcoran Gallery Auditorium.
Speakers: Nina Fletcher Little, "Early New England Landscape Panels"; Marvin C. Ross, "Richard Caton Woodville, The Genre Painter"; Samuel M. Green, "Charles Caleb Ward"; George H. Hamilton, "Duchamp and Picabia in New York"; James Thrall Soby, "Genesis of Peter Blume's *The Rock*."
Chairman: John I. H. Baur, Brooklyn Museum of Art.
2. NEW WORK IN FILMS AND SLIDES, National Gallery Auditorium.
Speakers: Sibyl Moholy-Magy, Rudolf Schaeffer School of Design (a special program of experimental films); Lester Bridaham, Art Institute of Chicago (on improved results in color slides); O. W. June of Taurgo, Inc. (on a central collection of slide negatives); and others.
Chairman: H. W. Janson, New York University.

ADDITIONAL SESSIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION:

- THE TRAINING OF GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE HISTORY OF ART.
Proposed Chairman: Dmitri Tselos, University of Minnesota.
- THE TRAINING OF ADVANCED STUDENTS IN CREATIVE ART.
Proposed Chairman: Lamar Dodd, University of Georgia.

EVENTS OF INTEREST PRECEDING C.A.A. WASHINGTON MEETING

1. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Friday, January 26, and Saturday, January 27, 1951
Joint meeting of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the American Philosophical Society with sessions on Aesthetics and Criticism, Archaeology and History of Art, Dealing and Collecting, and Museums of Art, with many internationally known participants.
Members of the CAA are especially invited and may obtain full program from our New York office.
2. The Society of Architectural Historians will open its meeting in Washington, D.C. on Sunday, January 28, 1951 with registration from 10:00 to 2:00 at the Hotel Statler, breakfast at 11:00, bus tour at 2:00 (\$1.50), lecture by the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres on "Work of the National Trust" at 5:00 P.M., and in the evening a series of short papers on early architecture of Washington at 8:00. For details write to Mrs. John M. Gilchrist, Secretary-Treasurer, 286 E. Sidney Avenue, Mt. Vernon, New York.
3. National Gallery in Washington, D.C. Professor Clarence Kennedy of Smith College will speak on the *David of the Casa Martelli* on Sunday, January 28, at 4:00 P.M.

letters to the editor

DEAR SIR:

The number of English texts on German Art of the 19th and 20th centuries is exceedingly scarce. One is therefore grateful to Mr. Myers for including a chapter on German art in his recently published *Modern Art in the Making* (McGraw Hill Book Company, New York 1950). It represents an effort to bring together the necessary facts for a textbook like treatment and it tries to explain aesthetic conditions, to some extent, from their underlying social causes. It would lead too far to tell here why in this writer's opinion the author has failed and must fail like anybody who derives creative urges from material causes. The history of ideas has a growth of its own, of which the visual arts are a part. This history can parallel economic history, yet it also can cause it or retard it. The first requirement, however, for a socially conscious interpretation of art would be that the facts are correct. Unfortunately the social picture of Germany between 1890 and 1910, as painted by Mr. Myers, is erroneous. Explaining the work of Kaethe Kollwitz he speaks of the "increasing economic misery of Germany (where three quarters of the population lived on abt. 75 Dollars a year)." The facts here stated are distorted. The epoch of Kaethe Kollwitz' rise is characterized by the rapid emergence of Germany into industrial and economic world power which brought about the great conflict of 1914-1918. Instead of "increasing economic misery" the population began to share in the increasing national wealth. The

middle class reached an unusually high living standard and the German labourer was the first in Europe to receive social insurance, legislated under Bismarck in the 1880. The statement that three quarters of the population lived on 75 dollars a year is therefore utterly fantastic. Mr. Myers could have said quite rightly that half of the population of Prussia (which represented the poorer part of Germany) existed on 300 Dollar per year. Kaethe Kollwitz art—like that of Hauptmann's "Die Weber"—is the expression of compassionate observation of the life of the poor and the exploited which theoretically could have been produced in any country during that period. The new element is not the representation of the misery of the working man but the selfconscious "proletarian" attitude, the result of the revolutionary class-consciousness which Marx, Lassalle and Engels bestowed upon the working men. The art of Kollwitz then is not the expression of the "increasing misery of Germany" (this artist earned very well due to the increasing prosperity of Germany) but the expression of new ideologies through which a compassionate woman and an able artist could speak more distinctly and less sentimentally.

There are other incorrectnesses which are disturbing. Goethe's "Hermann and Dorothea" is described as a "early sentimental middle-class tragedy" and to be definite, reference is made once more to this work of the "dramatist." "Hermann and Dorothea" is not an early work but was written in 1796 when Goethe was 47 years and, besides, it is an epic poem. This reference is used in connection with the discussion of a Romantic painting by Julius Oldach, a minor Hamburg painter, who depicted a scene from this poem. Unfortunately this is the only early Romantic painter Myers is mentioning. Not only must German Romanticism remain incomprehensible

with the derivative Oldach as the only name but European art history by omission is deprived of the greatest Romantic landscape painter—Casper David Friedrich. One is equally startled not to find Philipp Otto Runge, one of the most original artists Germany had produced during that period. Following the Romantics is a paragraph on "the neo-Christian attitude" in whose wake Pforr, Schnorr von Carolsfeld and Rethel are enumerated. Historically known as the "Nazarenes," this school came into being by two artists not mentioned in the text at all, Peter Cornelius and Friedrich Overbeck. Both artists, academic as they may look to us, enjoyed a European reputation, and, besides, showed in their early works a draftsmanship of nearly Ingres-like purity. Direct threads lead from Overbeck to the Pre-Raphaelite group in England. The artists discussed by Myers cannot be understood without knowing their greater teachers. Besides, Rethel hardly shared the "Neo-Christian" attitude although stylistically he is influenced by Cornelius. He must be considered the most creative exponent of the age of "historicism" and as the best interpreter of the new Romantic understanding for the graphic style of Dürer and Holbein.

Anselm Feuerbach mentioned only in parenthesis in connection with "old-fashioned portraits" is as a portraitist outshining his teacher Couture with whom his likenesses are connected stylistically. His portraits belong to the avantgarde of European portraiture during the period 1850-1870.

Arnold Böcklin is mentioned in one sentence and characterized by his "otherworldliness." (In connection with Chirico his art is called "morbid".) Böcklin—in spite of his "Island of Death"—was one of the healthiest, one of the most life-enjoying artists Switzerland, notorious for a healthy people, has ever produced. His vivacious imagination presented the dryads of the woods and the nymphs of the sea with zoological realism, thus startling his con-

temporaries with the Darwinian exactitude of his imaginary world. Böcklin's "otherworldliness" shows the all pervading influence of the ideologies of "realism" on the world of phantasy and as such has indeed (as mentioned by Mr. Myers) certain analogies to the style of the Pre-Raphaelites. In both of them the imaginative becomes spurious by realistic presentation.

Hans von Marées, also discussed in one sentence, is compared to Gauguin. While it is true that both of them seem to look at Art as the ultimate expression of serenity (thus redeeming their own disharmonious personalities), Gauguin created the "flat" style while Marées strove towards highest plasticity within an organised picture recession. Marées, the key figure of German art during the 19th century and therefore deserving a more intensive discussion, is rather comparable to an ideal middle between Puvion de Chavannes and Cézanne.

Adolph von Menzel is called "academic in coloring and photographic in arrangement." This is true enough for his official paintings but Menzel in his earlier landscapes and interiors was also one of the subtlest precursors of Impressionism building on the most advanced features of Constable and Turner whom he admired. Besides, he is with his interest in the accidental and instantaneous, denoted in thousands of superb sketches, a historical parallel to Degas and his realism.

From the discussion of Impressionism on the text offers a correct picture of the situation in Germany and any wish for discussion of some more artists or different evaluations could be contested as subjective. The case is different with the first section. This is doubly regrettable because the author embarked on such a necessary task and because he has written otherwise a very useful and well informed book.

May these objections lead to an improvement in a later edition.

ALFRED NEUMEYER
Mills College

DEAR SIR:

In reply to Dr. Neumeyer's informal review of the German chapter in my recent *Modern Art in the Making*, it should be made clear that the basic theme of this chapter, Expressionism: Revolt in Germany, is not discussed by him at all. At the end of his long letter attacking the introductory pages of the chapter, Dr. Neumeyer grudgingly concedes that "from the discussion of Impressionism on the text offers a correct picture of the situation in Germany. . . ." Although I am grateful for this concession, the fact remains that the approved section of the chapter consumes twenty-six of its thirty-three pages.

The seven pages which come under Dr. Neumeyer's scrutiny arouse three objections: first and foremost, they try to "explain aesthetic conditions, to some extent, from their underlying social causes;" second, the social causes listed by the author are said to be inaccurate anyway; and third, the facts concerning the nineteenth century painters are also considered incorrect.

The first point, the influences of social background on aesthetic conditions, might be debated, certainly, although the condescending dismissal of the whole matter with: "It would lead too far to tell here why in this writer's opinion the author has failed and must fail like anybody who tries to derive creative urges from material causes," is somewhat less than the question deserves. It should be pointed out, however, that the pages in question are not economic-determinist or ultra-materialist; they try to show the historical, religious, and social conditions affecting Germany and how these conditions were aggravated in terms of shock both spiritual and psychological at the end of the nineteenth century for reasons applicable to Germany more than to other countries. We may find it difficult, for example, to relate social causes to the development of modern French painting but surely there is no country in the modern world

whose recent history yields so quickly the fact of the intellectual in revolt against his environment as does Germany's; its literature, painting, the dance, the cinema, photography, sculpture, and other art forms show this quite clearly.

If Dr. Neumeyer had been less concerned about whether the majority of Germans earned \$75 a year or the majority of Prussians \$300 a year (and I am no more responsible for the \$75 figure than he is for the \$300 one), he might have given more consideration to my real arguments as to the effect of German background on its art. The "history of ideas" which "has a growth of its own" is, as most historians recognize, a particularly Germanic rather than French, British, or American attitude. Unlike the philosophers of the latter countries who lived in the exciting milieu of a newly found national unity in the eighteenth century and whose ideas were destined to exercise a profound influence on society, the German philosophers without that national background and separated from each other in a large number of provincial capitals developed into more abstract and idealistic thinkers. This fatal cleavage between philosophy and actuality has plagued Germany's entire development.

The idealist position in art history stems in good measure from these circumstances. To the degree that we have been affected by the contributions of German art history we are still struggling under this handicap. It is a handicap because it does not take into account the fact that art is made by human beings of a certain type produced by their epoch for other individuals in that same time and place.

What I recommend, therefore, is not some mechanical quid-pro-quo relationship of background fact to art fact, which negates the personal and spiritual contribution of each individual. We are interested in the impact of milieu on the artist's conscious and subconscious reactions and that is what I was trying

to show in Germany where the artist was in emotive revolt against the positivist restrictions of German society in family, school, church, and every other walk of life. Moreover, these things are clearly expressed by the artist not only in the themes of his pictures, the violently explosive or nonmaterial method of painting them, but in specific declarations of his aims as an artist and a human being. "We no longer paint for the sake of art," says Iwan Goll, "we paint for the sake of people." We have but to read the statements of Kirchner in his *Brücke* chronicle or those of Marc in his *Aphorisms* or his essays in *Der Blaue Reiter* in order to see and understand this point of view.

Dr. Neumeyer's belief that Germany was far from poor but rather enjoying a period of unexampled prosperity which led to the First World War is accompanied by what must be considered a naive statement concerning the high living standards of the middle class. Of course they had an increasingly high living standard and all the things that go with it but, at the risk of sounding subversive, at whose expense? According to Dr. Neumeyer, the German labourer was the first in Europe to receive social insurance but a decent living standard is more important than an inadequate insurance plan. Dr. Neumeyer goes on to say that "Kollwitz art—like that of Hauptmann's *Die Weber*—is the expression of compassionate observation of the life of the poor and the exploited which theoretically could have been produced in any country during that period." What poor and exploited does he mean, the ones with the social insurance? Theoretically, it could have happened elsewhere but that is precisely the point, it didn't. Instead we have in Germany not only Kollwitz, Fritz von Uhde, Max Liebermann, and others in painting but also authors like Schlaf, Holz, and Hauptmann as products of a widespread reaction against what was apparently nonexistent poverty.

Dr. Neumeyer claims further that such emanations are the results of a "selfconscious 'proletarian' attitude" on the part of people like Kollwitz, "the result of the revolutionary class-consciousness which Marx, Lassalle and Engels bestowed upon the working men." To speak of "selfconscious" proletarianism in connection with an artist like Kollwitz is palpably incorrect. Considering her pastor grandfather expelled from the government-controlled church, her father turning from law to labor, her brother contributing articles to *Der Vorwärts*, Germany's leading Socialist newspaper, her husband's medical practice in the working class quarter of Berlin, and her own deeply developed sense of the history of oppression, it seems peculiar to use such an expression concerning her.

As to the working class as a whole in Germany, it was notoriously slow to catch on to "advanced" social ideas in spite of Marx, Engels, and Lassalle whom Kollwitz undoubtedly understood. As for making a good deal of money out of her art as a proof of the prosperity of Germany, we do know that her things were popular and that they were reprinted in *Volksausgaben*, i.e. popular editions. How much she herself got out of this is another matter, as many dealers perhaps know.

All of this, however, is somewhat beside the point, for the German Expressionists were not in revolt against poverty, much as they sympathized with the poor and oppressed. As I pointed out very clearly, they were in revolt against materialism in life, against positivism in thinking, against every restrictive phase of living. What became of the movement later in its Activist or political phase during and after the war is another matter and one that is again taken up in the chapter under discussion.

The omissions charged to my brief treatment of the German nineteenth century would in some instances be quite

reasonable, were I not selecting only those facts which were most pertinent in revealing the earlier character of German art and life and which had most bearing on its future course. It was not intended to be a complete survey of the nineteenth century in Germany, which would be rather difficult to do in four pages. If that period does not come off too well, it is not always the fault of the writer. Max Deri, Germany's acknowledged authority in this field, has said that the first glance at early nineteenth century art in Germany is more than merely disappointing, it is terrifying.

On specific points: Dr. Neumeyer is certainly correct concerning Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea* which unfortunately I remembered as a play; but it is still a sentimental middle class tragedy. The fine quality he claims for Cornelius and Overbeck is to my mind rather debatable, although Dr. Neumeyer is again right that Rethel should not be included among the neo-Christians but among the heroic-Romantics. If Feuerbach outshines Couture it still leaves him with a great deal to be desired. In regard to Böcklin, one may prefer another word to "morbid" but to believe that morbidity is impossible to the Swiss is to ignore Hodler.

Hans von Marées, not meant to be dismissed but summarized for specific purposes in the brief mention of pre-Expressionist artists, was compared with Gauguin only in the sense of their common interest in an idyllic world, an important late nineteenth century phenomenon. Adolf von Menzel still remains important as an objective realist in spite of his well known earlier interiors, a confusing distinction which had no place under the circumstances already indicated.

BERNARD MYERS
New York City

DEAR SIR:*

The examination for Curator, Art

Gallery, Oakland, Calif., was held a fortnight ago by the Civil Service Board. It might have been entitled in part, "Odd and Irrelevant Facts you might know about Art History." The Chamber of Commerce considered the position to be an "opportunity for service and the promise of the future rich and challenging" and as such they advertised nationwide for applicants. Twenty-three contestants took the examination, six of whom passed, scoring only in the 70's although three hold Ph.D. degrees in Fine Arts.

The experts have been expertized by the laymen. Let me cite only three examples at random from among the several hundred statements to be checked true or false. The following are selected from the portion of the test headed General Information:

"Sung pottery, as produced in China, was usually porcelain."

Rated as true by the Civil Service Board. It is false, it is also nonsensical. One may as well say salads are usually carrots. Pottery and porcelain are well-defined by various dictionaries and are very different things.

"Chinese craftsmen in bronze employed a secret method of applying a patina."

Rated as true by the Civil Service Board. It is false and utterly ridiculous. Patina is the product of time and natural elements. Further, in some excavated bronzes the original surface has been preserved in part and is as bright as newly polished brass. Where did the Board get its information?

"In general Japanese art is more stolid and less plastic than Chinese art."

Rated false by the Civil Service Board. It is false, and so would be the opposite. Why not the French are less, or more,

* Originally addressed to Dr. Alfred Salmony, this letter was forwarded to the Editor and is published with the author's permission.

stolid than the Norwegians? Another nonsensical question based upon impossible generalizations.

There are equally ambiguous or incorrectly marked statements in other fields. The following were labeled "False" in the opinion of the Board:

"Eris Gill was a leading expressionist sculptor."

"In storing pictures the use of padding is not necessary if separators are used."

Such statements as these were considered "True":

"A Curator should take the time to convince a stubborn subordinate."

"A person acting in haste remains calm."

Oakland is to be lauded for wanting a curator who would contribute to the city's cultural advancement. However, is it not defeating its own purpose through presenting to the candidates an examination which is not factually sound? Does Oakland deserve its fate? Is it the last outpost of civilization, or will the local board realize that in professional and scholarly fields it should no longer formulate examinations without expert supervision.

Sincerely,
ALICE BREUER

*East-West Arts Gallery,
San Francisco, California*

DEAR SIR:

I read with great interest Julius Portnoy's article entitled, "A Psychological Theory of Artistic Creation" in the Fall, 1950, issue of the COLLEGE ART JOURNAL. With deep insight, Mr. Portnoy manages to make us understand the point of departure for an artistic creation. When answering the question of why an artist creates, he correctly states because of an inner, deeply-felt emotional tension—the content of any work of art. But when it comes to how this content is expressed, the author only employs the words, "technique" and "design."

As much light as the author throws on the reasons for creation—the "why"

—he fails to discuss the method—the "how" of creation, a matter of equal importance in understanding the mysterious inner mechanism, through which the inner need to create a work of art is actually carried out, resulting in the work itself.

Andre Gide once said that artistic creation is selection and discipline. Mr. Portnoy's explanation of emotional intensity only partly covers the reasons for artistic creation, for the artist must select, quite unconsciously, one emotional experience from the many which moves him and "pressures" him to unload or exteriorize this experience.

But Mr. Portnoy's word "technique" is too vague. Discipline must come into play, a culmination and summary of an intense, creative experience. If, for example, the artist is a painter, he will feel the inherent emotional quality of each color and their interrelationship. For these colors have their own life, their own language; they have an inner life within the unity of a given space (whether it be a canvas or wall space) and with discipline this space is organized into a coordinated living organism. This is not merely technique of execution, but the coordination of an emotional experience, through an instinctive comprehension of the creative medium, which when successfully realized in the completed work of art and told in a language powerful and unmistakable is "read" by the onlooker. When one is able to "read" a work of art, he is able to decipher the language of color—transfer and make the artist's emotional experience his own. He re-lives the content: the "why" of the work of art.

An African native, with his great, intense feeling (animism, spirit, ancestor or magical belief) could not have been able to create works of art of such high quality if, by tradition, he had not been cognizant of the drama and expression in plastic forms. When these forms were coordinated and formed into an artistic unity, they became a universal language, enabling us to re-live the artist's emo-

tional experience. African sculpture is not great because it was created by Africans or because we know of the emotional experience which is the content of the work; but because it has plastic unities of great purity, unparalleled among many cultured people.

The great secret of creation depends not only on how deeply felt is the emotional experience, but how successfully

it is coordinated into an organic unity through the use of plastic language. The work of art will then become a vehicle or an embodiment of the artist's emotion which will speak and live within us.

Sincerely yours,
LADISLAS SEGY
*Director,
Segy Gallery, New York*

obituaries

Elizabeth Haseltine Hibbard, well-known Chicago sculptor and Assistant Professor of Art at the University of Chicago, died September 4, 1950, after some months of illness.

Mrs. Hibbard studied sculpture at the Portland (Oregon) Art School, the Art Institute of Chicago, and in Paris; among her teachers were Bourdelle, Mestrovic, and De Creeft. She had been teaching at the University of Chicago since 1922, and she had taught also at the Art

Institute of Chicago between 1927 and 1932. Her delightful animal sculptures have figured in many exhibitions and have received many prizes.

As a teacher, Mrs. Hibbard will always be remembered by her colleagues and by the numerous students whom she trained, for the skill and understanding which she devoted unstintingly to her work, and as a friend, for her splendid loyalty and forthrightness, and for the warmth and charm of her personality.

news reports

NOTES

ADELPHI COLLEGE. Paintings by Albert Pels, founder of the Albert Pels School of Art, were exhibited during the month of November.

ALBION COLLEGE. On Thursday, March 8, 1951, Professor Charles L. Stevenson, University of Michigan, will lecture on "What's the Use of Art, Anyhow?"

Among the exhibitions scheduled for the Spring semester are printed textiles, public school art, American and French paintings. Three motion pictures, *Chartres Cathedral*, *Henri Matisse*, and *The River* by Pare Lorenz and Virgil Thompson will be shown in February.

ART STUDENTS LEAGUE OF NEW YORK. In celebration of its 75th anniversary, the League had a Diamond Jubilee Dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria on Nov. 10. Speakers at the dinner included: Francis H. Taylor, Director of the Metropolitan Museum; Rene d'Harnoncourt, Director of the Museum of Modern Art; Lloyd G. Goodrich, Assistant Director of the Whitney Museum; Yasuo Kuniyoshi, President of Artists Equity; Emily Genauer, Art Critic of the N.Y. *Herald-Tribune*; Frank DuMond, Senior instructor at the League, who has been teaching there since 1892; and Henry E. Schnakenberg, former President of the League. The main address was given by John Sloan, former President of the League. E. Leslie Waid, current President of the League, welcomed guests, and Stewart Klonis, Executive Director of the Art Students League was Toastmaster.

BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART. "Behold the Child," a survey of the child as he is portrayed by the artist through the ages, was held during the month of November. The exhibition was accompanied by an illustrated catalogue.

CLEVELAND INSTITUTE OF ART. Faculty changes, aside from William Eastman (see page 188), include the resignation of Virginia Nepodal, Thelma Winter, Ugo Graziotti, Robert Wolaver and William Shock. The new appointments include Steven Atzel, lettering; Harry Schulke, textile design; Paul Riba, drawing and illustration; Walter Uhle, drawing; and John Teyral, who has just returned from a year's study in Europe on a Fulbright Grant.

Visiting lecturers this fall were: Jerome Mellquist, author of *The Birth of American Tradition in Art*, who spoke on the present Carnegie Exhibition in Pittsburgh and spent an afternoon discussing problems of contemporary art with students; Louis Bosa who spoke on his exhibition and worked with students in the painting studio; and Albert Dorne, nationally-known illustrator, who discussed problems of his profession and the future careers of artists. As a souvenir of his visit, Mr. Dorne donated \$25 as a prize for the "most outstanding non-objective painting" exhibited in the Spring Student Independent Show next April.

The Annual Faculty Exhibition was held in the gallery of the Institute during December.

THE COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK. Helen Hirs, former chairman of the Art Department at the High School of Music and Art, has been appointed associate professor in the Department of Art at City College. She will conduct courses in art and art education.

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO. Robert Propst, M.F.A. 1950, is now head of the Fine Arts Extension Center in Denver.

Frank Geck was in Europe two months, traveling and doing research on period furniture and interiors in Paris and London.

Raymond Jacobson, who has recently returned from teaching at Baylor University, was given a purchase award in the Manhattan (Kansas) art exhibit.

Ruth Talovich, former faculty member, was given the purchase award in watercolor at the Denver Annual (Artists West of the Mississippi).

Ann Jones is now secretary of the Colorado State Art Association and member of the International Art Exchange jury sponsored by NAEA and the Junior Red Cross.

THE COOPER UNION. Pierre Kleykamp, designer and architect, formerly on the faculty of the Academy of Arts and Sciences, The Hague, has been named instructor in Architecture.

Josef Presser, Peter H. Francia, and Charles Seide have been added to the art staff to teach painting, and Eugene Karlin, M. Peter Piening, and Alexander Nesbitt to teach graphic arts.

Everett P. Lesley Jr., formerly curator of European art at the Detroit Institute of Arts and faculty member at the University of Minnesota and Brown University, has been appointed Assistant in the Exhibits Section at the Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration.

Miss Jean Elizabeth Mailey, formerly Assistant in Textiles and Oriental Art at the Cleveland Art Museum, has been appointed to the Museum staff as Assistant Keeper of Textiles.

CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART. The Fifth Annual Area Exhibition will be continued through Feb. 25. Mrs. Adelyn D. Breeskin, Director of the Baltimore Museum of Art, served as juror for the paintings, water colors, drawings and prints. Sculpture and ceramics were judged by David K. Smith.

The last day for receiving entry cards for the Twenty-second Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Painting will be Feb. 3, and all work is

due Feb. 9. The exhibition, to be held March 31 to May 13, is open to all artists living in the U. S. and its possessions. The W. A. Clark Prize Awards, totalling \$5,200, will be made by an impartial jury.

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY. The unveiling of a bust of Dr. Hans Kindler, founder and conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra from 1931 to 1949 took place in the University Library on Nov. 2, 1950. The bronze bust, by Kalervo Kallio who is the son of the former President of Finland, is heroic in size and rests on a six foot pedestal. The donors prefer to remain anonymous.

The paintings and drawings by Atanas Tasev were exhibited during the month of December.

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA. By means of a grant made jointly by the General Education Board and the Board of Regents of the University System, the department of art has scheduled the visits of scholars and artists who will join the art staff for periods varying from ten days to three months.

James J. Sweeney, vice-president of the International Art Critics Association and formerly with the Museum of Modern Art, visited the campus in November. He conducted a graduate course, "Objectives of Twentieth Century Painting," and presented formal lectures—"The Artist and the Work of Art" on Nov. 15, "The Artist and Tradition" on Nov. 20, and "The Artist in Twentieth Century" on Nov. 22.

In January William Zorach will be lecturing and advising students in sculpture and related fields. Also in January, Alvin Lustig, graphic designer, will be in residence. Mr. Lustig will act in an advisory capacity, coordinating the related fields of crafts, ceramics, interior design and advertising design. He is at present guest teacher at the University of California at Los Angeles.

During the spring quarter, Ralph Fanning, professor of art history at Ohio

State University, and Sue Fuller, graphic artist, will be on the campus. Miss Fuller has been visiting artist at the University of Minnesota this fall.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY. Professor Kenneth J. Conant, Fulbright Appointee for archaeological work at Cluny, was exchange professor to France during the spring term, 1949-50. He lectured at the Sorbonne and provincial French universities.

Miss Agnes Mongan, curator of drawings of the Fogg Art Museum, received a leave of absence from the university, and on a Fulbright grant has been working in Rome on a projected book on Saints and Their Symbols.

The following graduate students, working on their doctoral dissertations, will spend this year abroad: Alfred K. Moir at the University of Pisa and Sidney Simon at the University of Paris, both on a Fulbright grant; James B. I. Holderbaum and Alan R. Solomon in France on Harvard Fellowships.

An endowment fund will enable the college to have a half-course on Egyptian Art every other year. Dr. William Stevenson Smith of the Department of Egyptian Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, holds the lectureship during the current year.

Two new studio courses are being offered in drawing, painting and sculpture, taught by Patrick Morgan and Waldemar Raemisch.

The following students in the graduate school have been appointed teaching fellows in Fine Arts for the current academic year: S. G. Brien, William J. Coe, James H. Elliott, James W. Fowle, Carl N. Schmalz, Jr., Nicholas N. Solovioff, and Robert R. Wark.

HOOD COLLEGE. New assistant professor and acting head of the art department is Thomas B. Brumbaugh, of Greencastle, Pa. Mr. Brumbaugh took his Master's at the State University of Iowa and for several summers has been studying at Ohio State University and Harvard on his doctorate. He has form-

erly taught art history at Emory University.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS. Lee R. Chesney has been appointed assistant professor and will head the newly-established graphics area. Mr. Chesney received his M.F.A. from the State University of Iowa, where he has taught for the past four years.

New instructors in art are Eric J. Bransby (Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center and Yale) and Leonard W. Zamiska (Cleveland Institute of Art). Other additions to the staff include Richard J. Dudley (University of Missouri), Albert J. Kaytor (Pratt Institute), Robert A. Leader (Yale), Saunders Schultz (Washington University, St. Louis), Joseph E. Schwarz (Ohio Wesleyan) and Richard F. Smith (Yale).

Professor Warren F. Doolittle and Edward Betts are represented in the Metropolitan Museum's national exhibition, "American Painting Today—1950," being shown from Dec. 8, 1950 to Feb. 25, 1951.

The 27th Annual Faculty Art Exhibition was held from Oct. 29 to Nov. 26, and selections from this show together with other work by the art department were seen at the University of Illinois galleries at Navy Pier in Chicago during December. Represented in the show were La Force Bailey, Edward Betts, C. Earl Bradbury, Eric Bransby, Carleton W. Briggs, Nicholas Britsky, Lee Chesney, Charles A. Dietemann, Warren F. Doolittle, C. V. Donovan, Robert A. Drummond, George N. Foster, Richard E. Hult, William Kennedy, James H. Lynch, Marvin Martin, Raymond Perlman, Arthur J. Pulos, John Rauschenberger, Harold A. Schultz, James Shipley, Mark Sprague, Bacia Stepner, Louise Woodroffe, Leonard W. Zamiska and Nicola Zirolli.

The Chicago Division of the University of Illinois held an exhibit "Visual Education for Architects," prepared by visual design students under the direction of Gyorgy Kepes at M.I.T. and circulated by the American Federation of Art, during November.

INSTITUTE OF DESIGN OF ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY. Paul Wieghardt and his wife, Nelli Bar, have been appointed instructors in life drawing in the Institute's architecture department. Both were born in Germany and studied at the School of Fine Arts, Cologne and the Academy of Fine Arts, Dresden. They came to the United States in 1940, and have worked, taught and exhibited extensively in this country.

Gyorgy Kepes, professor of architecture at M.I.T. and former member of the staff of the Institute of Design, spoke on "Expression in Architecture" on Oct. 10 in the auditorium of the Institute.

On Dec. 10, the Institute auctioned 120 pieces of contemporary art, including oil and casein paintings, water colors, prints and sculpture, the majority of which were works of students and staff. All proceeds were contributed to the Institute's Maholy-Nagy memorial scholarship fund. Auctions of the past two years have netted 11 one-semester scholarships.

INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS, N.Y.U. A comprehensive Loan Exhibition of Goya, including 47 paintings, 25 drawings, and 30 etchings was held for the benefit of the Institute at the Wildenstein Gallery from Nov. 9 through Dec. 16, 1951.

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE. A Childe Hassam painting, entitled *Boston: Acorn Street in Wartime, 1918*, has been presented to the university by an anonymous donor. It will be added to the university's growing art collection.

Also, an anonymous donor has given the art department a water color, *Pont St. Marie*, by American artist Ogden Pleissner.

During the current year, the art department is presenting 24 exhibitions, including water colors, prints, sculpture and oils.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN. The University of Michigan Museum of Art held, in November, a loan exhibition on

the theme "Sport and Circus," which included 81 items—paintings, drawings and prints—borrowed from widely scattered sources. The works ranged from Géricault, Degas, Eakins and Homer to Bellows, Marin, Demuth, Shahn, Chagall and Rouault. Background interest was provided in the galleries by a wooden carousel horse, some old-time circus posters, and General Tom Thumb's bicycle, the latter borrowed from the Edison Institute Museum at Dearborn.

The Museum's large Beckmann oil, *Begin the Beguine*, was part of the group of his work selected by this artist to represent him at this year's *Biennale* in Venice.

Among recent accessions in the Museum of Art are a cast iron and forged steel abstraction, *Tabstvaat*, by David Smith, two small stone sculptures by John Flannagan, an oil, *The Cluster*, by Arthur Osver, a tempera, *Boy*, by Ben Shahn, and a water color, *Italian Gothic* by William Thon.

MILWAUKEE-DOWNER COLLEGE. Milwaukee-Downer College will observe the one hundredth anniversary of the granting of its charter and has selected March 1, 1951 for the celebration of its centennial.

THE MINNEAPOLIS SCHOOL OF ART. The Minneapolis School of Art has been recently accepted as an institution of higher learning, and under the new directorship of Robert M. Coffin, is undergoing many changes. New staff members include: Willard E. Lamm, instructor of painting; Lillian Garrett, instructor of interior design; and Betty Peterson, night school instructor of fashion illustration.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA. Malcolm Myers, assistant professor in graphic arts, received a Guggenheim Fellowship to do research and creative work in the field of prints. He has leave of absence from Oct. 2, 1950 to June 15, 1951 and intends to study in Paris.

Sue Fuller is teaching print processes

as guest artist this fall and Harry Sternberg will be guest artist in print processes from March 29 to June 16, 1951.

The first National Print Exhibit to be sponsored by the university was held at the University Gallery from Dec. 6, 1950 to Jan. 19, 1951.

Josephine L. Rollins, assistant professor of art, received a Regional Writing Fellowship to do a series of paintings interpreting life and conditions of the mid-20th century in the Upper Midwest.

Paul D. Frazier, who teaches sculpture and work shop courses, is a new staff member this fall. He has taught sculpture at the Detroit Institute of Art and at the Cranbrook Art Academy. Last year, Frazier traveled in Europe and studied under Ossip Zadkin in Paris.

Hylton A. Thomas has joined the art staff as assistant professor in art history. Mr. Thomas has held teaching positions at the University of Chicago, and while gathering material for his Ph.D. thesis he traveled throughout Europe on a Sheldon Traveling Fellowship from Harvard University.

Cameron Booth is back this fall and is teaching drawing and painting.

A new sequence in metal sculpture, taught by Philip Morton, is offered this fall. This series which still includes instruction on contemporary jewelry design, now offers instruction in casting small bronze sculpture.

Design and photography begins a new two-year series for students desiring a more intensive study than previously offered. This course offers techniques and use of photography as a creative and the application of design relationship. It is taught by Allen Downs and Jerome Leibling.

MOUNT HOLYOKE. Henry Rox, sculptor and associate professor of art, has been the recipient of the National Sculpture Society Prize, awarded annually at the Ceramic National, held recently at the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART. Seventy-five oils by the late Chaim Lotz (1894-1943) were exhibited from Nov. 1 through Jan. 7, after which they will be shown at the co-sponsoring institution, The Cleveland Museum of Art.

Finn Juhl, Director of the School of Interior Design in Copenhagen, has been selected to design the installation for the new version of the "Good Design" exhibition of home furnishings sponsored by the Museum of Modern Art and the Merchandise Mart in Chicago. The exhibition will open in Chicago on Jan. 15 at The Mart, and will remain on view throughout 1951.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA. Duard Laging has been appointed Acting Director of the University of Nebraska Galleries, and he has appointed Norman A. Geske, formerly from the Walker Art Center staff, as Assistant Director of the Galleries.

Tom Sheffield, graduate of Cranbrook Academy, is in charge of ceramics in the art department.

Rudy Pozzatti, M.F.A. 1950, Colorado, is teaching graphics and painting.

Manfred Keiler from Weimar, Germany, heads the art education area of the department.

The Art Galleries are showing work of the Nebraska faculty during January.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY. As part of the celebration of its centennial year, Northwestern plans to hold next April 16 and 17 a conference on "The Arts in Modern Society." The conference will be concerned with the status of literature, music, drama, the fine arts, and related arts in contemporary society and with the university's role in encouraging the works of artists today.

Dr. Mary F. Williams, for two years Dean of Women at Middlebury College, has returned to teaching the history of art on a one-year appointment as assistant professor where she is replacing Dr. G. Haydn Huntley, now on a leave of absence for 1950-51. Dr. Huntley, who

holds a fellowship under the Fulbright Act, will devote the coming year to research on Giorgio Vasari at the University of Florence.

William S. Stipe, instructor, was awarded a purchase prize this summer for one of his watercolors at the 8th annual Ohio Valley Oil and Watercolor Exhibition.

During October the paintings and drawings of George M. Cohen, instructor, were exhibited with paintings and sculpture by his wife, Constance Cohen, at the Bordelon Gallery in Chicago.

PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS. Purchase of paintings and sculpture by living American artists up to the value of \$30,000 was provided for by joint action of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and The Pennsylvania Academy. The items so purchased will be selected from the work of artists exhibiting in this season's 146th Annual Exhibition of Oil Painting and Sculpture at the Academy from January 21 to February 25, 1951.

Three of the four winners of the \$2000 Tiffany Foundation Grants are students of the Pennsylvania Academy. They are John Hanlen (painting), James A. Hanes (painting) and Edward Hoffman (sculpture).

UNIVERSITY MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA. New Classical and Prehistoric Galleries, containing over 250 Greek and Roman objects, were opened on October 28. The new galleries, which have been established under the direction of Dr. Rodney S. Young, curator of the Mediterranean Section of the Museum, consist of three rooms—one containing prehistoric objects from Greece, another devoted to the display of Classical Greek objects and made up entirely of originals, and a third, to be opened in the near future, Roman and Italian objects.

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM. The Samuel H. Kress Foundation has pre-

sented a collection of twenty-six works of Italian art of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. This collection went on view Nov. 4, 1950, at the same time the Museum's Diamond Jubilee exhibition opened. The hundred paintings and hundred drawings which make up the Jubilee exhibition may be seen until Feb. 11, 1951.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH. Sir Osbert Sitwell spoke on "The Civilization of Angkor Vat" on Nov. 28, 1950. An exhibit of Cambodian sculpture was arranged for Nov. 15 to Dec. 1.

WABASH COLLEGE. John Douglas Forbes has been promoted to Professor of History and Fine Arts.

WALKER ART CENTER. "American Painting," the 5th Biennial Purchase Exhibition, comprised of 118 contemporary paintings was on view until Dec. 10, 1950. "Useful Gifts, 1950" and the annual "Christmas Sale" will continue through Jan. 21, 1951.

WALTERS ART GALLERY. *Majolica:* The first comprehensive showing of the Walters Collection of Italian Majolica comprising some eighty items will continue through Jan. 7, 1951.

WOMAN'S COLLEGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA. The seventh annual International Textile Exhibition at Woman's College Weatherspoon Gallery, held during November, contained 67 selected pieces submitted by designers and craftsmen from 33 states and Canada. A total of \$2,755 in purchase awards were distributed to prize winners in the seven categories of woven materials—rugs, clothing, fabrics, draperies and upholstery, napery and linens, printed textiles, woven synthetics, and woven linen. Judges of the entries were Robert D. Sailors, Bitely, Mich.; Leslie Tillett, New York City; and John W. Courtney of the W.C. art faculty.

YALE UNIVERSITY. *The Works of Colonel John Trumbull, Artist of the American Revolution*, written by Theodore Sizer, professor of the History of Art, and published by the Yale Press, is a thorough check list of the artist's work and includes about 50 halftone and line-cut illustrations and re-edited keys to Trumbull's historical paintings. In addition, it has a selected bibliography and explanatory essays on the colonel's technical procedure and about his recordings of early versions of the national flag.

Mr. Sizer is working on another Trumbull project, the editing of Trumbull's out-of-print *Autobiography*. He hopes this volume will appear within a year.

WILLIAM J. EASTMAN, 1888-1950

"The news of William J. Eastman's death on August 24 came as a shock to his many friends among the faculty, students and patrons of the Cleveland Institute of Art. Born in Cleveland, Feb. 14, 1888, he was trained at the Cleveland School of Art and went on for advanced study in Paris before he returned to become a permanent member of the Art School staff. Throughout his long and successful career, Mr. Eastman was able to maintain that rarely achieved balance between teaching and creative art, as well as an active business and social life. His painting had been exhibited annually with many prize awards since the first May Show at the Cleveland Museum of Art. He was a frequent exhibitor in national competitions and is represented in the permanent collections of the Cleveland, Whitney and Los Angeles Museums of Art. . . ."—*Newsletter*, Cleveland Institute of Art, Series 4, No. 4.

TO UNIVERSITIES, MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES, ART DEALERS, AND BOOKSELLERS

"It is the responsibility and desire of the Government of the United States to recover and return to owner nations those cultural objects, including works of art, archival material and books,

looted, stolen or improperly dispersed from public and private collections in war areas and brought to the United States during and following World War II.

"This responsibility has been shared by American institutions and American citizens. The response of museums, libraries, and dealers to a circular letter from the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas requesting information about objects without a clear title has led to the recovery by this Government of a number of items of artistic and historic importance. The continued vigilance of American institutions and individuals in identifying cultural objects improperly dispersed during World War II is needed.

"Your cooperation in notifying the Secretary of State, Washington 25, D.C., concerning such objects which may come to your attention will be appreciated."
—Department of State

ART NEWS FROM COURIER DE FRANCE

Two hundred little-known masterpieces of the 17th and 18th centuries, many of which have never been publicly exhibited before and are not included in catalogues of the artists' work, have been lent by private Parisian collectors to the Musée Carnavalet.

Salon des Surindépendants, which dispenses with a jury, prizes and restrictions on exhibitors, held its seventeenth annual exhibit this fall at the Porte de Versailles Exposition Grounds. Critics found there was "nothing mediocre at this lively Salon, only the best and the worst."

Delacroix' house at Champrosay, near Paris, has been acquired by Pierre Vérité. M. Vérité bought the villa where the painter spent his last years so that he could display to greater advantage a thousand examples of African, Polynesian, Indian, Mexican, Eskimo and European statuary, collected "to prove the unity of sculpture and of beauty in

all religions and forms of society."

The development of Italian graphic and miniature art from the 4th to the 16th centuries is the theme of "Treasures of the Italian Libraries," November exhibit at the Bibliothèque Nationale. Drawings by Leonardo, Botticelli, Raphael and other Renaissance masters, loaned by Roman and Florentine museums, complement the books and manuscripts. A fully documented catalogue was prepared for this exhibit.

Jean Dewasne and Edgar Pillet have opened a new school of abstract art in Paris.

George Desvallières, painter, pioneer of the modern movement in religious art, and onetime president of the Salon d'Automne, died Oct. 5 at the age of 90.

Cluny's new halls of medieval sculpture, enamels and jewelry will open early this year.

The Musée Guimet, Paris' museum of Oriental art, has been completely transformed since the war. Recently it inaugurated new halls of Chinese and Japanese painting and ceramics.

Models of the French cathedrals may soon be added to the collection of sculpture and fresco reproductions in the Musée des Monuments Français (in the Palais de Chaillot). The museum of Montauban, Bourdelle's native town, is holding a major exhibit of his work. A large hall of this museum will in the future be permanently devoted to Bourdelle.

NEW ART BOOKS: Bernard Champigneulle's new history of primitive and medieval French sculpture (*La Sculpture en France de la Préhistoire à la Fin du Moyen-Age*, Editions Audin, Lyon), has 91 reproductions of unfamiliar works. A second volume on sculpture from the Renaissance to modern times is in preparation. . . . In *Au Louvre* (Editions Domat, Paris) Georges Salles, Director of the French National Museums, paints "scenes from the life of the Museum" that illustrate the backstage efforts of dozens of specialists. His book offers topographical and historical plans of the

Louvre collections. . . . André Malraux applies the theories put forward in his *Psychology of Art* to Goya in *Saturne* (NRF, Paris). . . . New information on Jean Goujon is offered in an objective study by Pierre du Colombier (*Jean Goujon*, Editions Albin Michel, Paris). . . . Dufy's brilliantly colored world excludes only sadness and shadows is the thesis of Claude Roger-Marz' study of the painter, published by Fernan Hazan. It has 24 reproductions of the artist's water colors and 7 pages of analytic text.

UNESCO COLOR PRINT CATALOGUE AVAILABLE

UNESCO has just published a 180-page catalogue of color reproductions of great paintings done before 1860, which are available at moderate prices. More than 500 years of paintings are represented by 418 of the works of 170 masters, chosen from among more than 2,000 reproductions offered by the principal publishers of the world.

The standards of choice of the reproductions contained in the catalogue were the significance of the artist, the importance of the painting, and the fidelity of the reproduction. The committee making the selections included Dr. H. Gerson, Deputy-Director of the National Bureau for the Documentation of Art History, The Hague; Charles Sterling and Hélène Adhémar of the Louvre; Sir Philip Hendy of the National Gallery in London; Professor Mario Salmi of Rome; and Professor J. Pijoan of Chicago.

Each reproduction is printed in the catalogue in black and white, accompanied by details in French, English and Spanish about the painting, the painter, and also the reproductions. In each case, the reader can learn exactly where he can buy the reproduction and at what price.

The catalogue brings to completion a UNESCO project of compiling a list of good available color reproductions begun last year with the publication of a similar volume, containing 423 separate items

covering the period from 1860 to 1949. The two UNESCO Catalogues of Color Reproductions of Paintings may be obtained in the United States from the Columbia University Press, 2960 Broadway, New York 27, N.Y. The price of the catalogue of paintings prior to 1860 is \$2; the price of the catalogue of paintings from 1860 to 1949 is \$1.50.

UNESCO ISSUES PHOTOGRAPHIC DIRECTORY

UNESCO recently issued its *International Directory of Photographic Archives of Works of Art*. This Directory is designed to serve as a source of reference, listing as completely as possible the photographic collections of works of art now maintained in various countries. It is believed that the list of photographic archives in the various institutions of the United States are many, and it is therefore desired that those universities and colleges which maintain such archives should contact UNESCO immediately in an effort to improve and develop UNESCO's Directory.

The publication *International Directory of Photographic Archives of Works of Art* represents the most up-to-date source of international information. Prior to this publication, the only Directory was a Catalogue of Photographic Archives of the Works of Art issued in 1927 by the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation which covered only 500 collections in 32 countries. The inventory contained in the present Directory lists information on 1,190 collections in 87 countries.

It is most important that all collections of photographic archives be adequately recorded with information on the extent and classification of the collection. In this way existing gaps can be filled as well as developing and improving technical problems involved. It is suggested that colleges and universities write the Department of Cultural Activities, UNESCO House, 19 Avenue Kleber, Paris 16, France, offering information on their photographic archives.

COMMITTEE FOR RECEPTION OF FRENCH SCHOLARS ORGAN- IZED

Dr. Thomas Munro of the Cleveland Museum of Art, Professor of art at Western Reserve University, and Editor of the *Journal of Aesthetics*, is organizing a committee of American scholars in various fields who have returned after residence in France as recipients of Fulbright grants for research or lecturing. This committee, which has tentatively been named "The American Committee for the Reception of French Scholars," will be unofficial in nature. Its aim is to cooperate with official agencies in Washington, Paris, and New York in securing invitations from American universities, museums, and other institutions for French lecturers and research scholars. At present Fulbright funds can be used to pay the transportation of such French persons to the United States and back, but not their living expenses while in this country. American institutions who may consider inviting a French scholar or lecturer may correspond with Dr. Munro, or directly with the Conference Board of Associated Research Councils in Washington.

Dr. Munro has also announced the establishment of a "Cleveland Scholarship in Art and Aesthetics" for the year 1951-52, to be awarded by the Fulbright Commission in France to a research scholar from that country. The scholarship carries a cash award of \$1500 from the Cleveland Museum of Art and free tuition valued at \$480 for study in the graduate school of Western Reserve University.

Dr. Munro recently returned from a year in France as Visiting Professor of Aesthetics at the Sorbonne, on a Fulbright grant. He is now Chairman of the Advisory Selection Committee for Fulbright awards in fine arts and architecture to applicants from the United States. Awards will be recommended by this Committee for grants on the lecturing and research levels to all countries covered by the Fulbright agreement.

MILWAUKEE HOLDS BEAUX ARTS BALL

Milwaukee's Beaux Arts Ball, held Jan. 6, 1951 in the Milwaukee Auditorium, provided assistance for the maintenance of the Milwaukee Art Institute and for the building fund of the Layton School of Art as well as a celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors Association.

The committee in charge, headed by Mes. Roland S. Cron and Charles Zadak, was made up of directors of the Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors, of which Edward A. Boerner is president; representatives of the Institute and the Layton and representatives of many civic, social and professional organization.

The committee hopes to make the ball an annual event. Its objective is clarified by the following statement: "The committee, convinced that no civilization can flourish without culture, will have as its major objectives—the development of interest in art in the community through its help to existing art organizations until such time as they are integrated in the War Memorial Building. The committee will then switch its activities as a society of the Friends of the Arts to the raising of funds that will be used to acquire works of art for the Memorial, to institute fellowships for promising artists of Wisconsin as established by qualified juries, and to support, develop and stimulate art activities generally in Wisconsin."

Wisconsin artist and octogenarian, Louis Mayer, now living in New York, was guest of honor at the Ball.

WNYC'S AMERICAN ART FESTIVAL

Mayor Vincent R. Impellitteri opened WNYC's first annual American Art Festival with a broadcast address on Sunday, Oct. 15. The City Station's week-long tribute to American art and artists which began that day consisted of more than 100 programs devoted to the entire field of art in contemporary life, and was offered as a companion program feature

to the Municipal Broadcasting System's annual American Music Festival, held yearly from Feb. 12 through Feb. 22.

Program co-ordinators for the Art Festival were Condon Riley and Alan Carter, with a planning committee consisting of Hudson Walker of Artists' Equity, chairman, art critics Emily Genauer of the N.Y. *Herald-Tribune* and Howard Devree of the *New York Times*, and Andrew Ritchie, Museum of Modern Art.

The extensive review of the art world which WNYC's Festival provided is indicated by the panel subjects, a partial list being Careers in Art, Art and Architecture, Art in Literature, Industrial Design, Art and Ballet, The Muralist and the Modern Architect, Theatre Arts, Advertising Arts, Fashion and Design, Photographic Art, and State and Subsidized Art, Art Abroad, History of Art, Floral Art, and the Institute of International Education.

MAGAZINE OF ART ESSAY AWARDS

In order to stimulate writing in interpretation of the visual arts, the *Magazine of Art* is offering the following awards for essays by writers 35 years of age or under: a first prize of \$150 in each of the three fields—American Art, The Baroque and Rococo, and Design of Useful Objects—and publication in the *Magazine of Art*. Two honorable mentions in each of these fields and publication in the *Magazine of Art* at its usual rates. The *Magazine of Art* reserves the right to publish at its usual rates any additional manuscripts submitted or to withhold awards at the discretion of the judges.

Judges in the American Art classification are: John I. H. Baur, Curator of Painting, Brooklyn Museum; Dorothy Miller, Curator of Museum Collections, Museum of Modern Art; and George H. Hamilton, Dept. of History of Art, Yale University. Baroque and Rococo: H. W. Janson, Chairman, Department of Fine Arts, Washington Square College, New

York University; Wolfgang Stechow, Chairman, Department of Fine Arts, Oberlin College; and Katharine B. Neilson, Acting Director of Education, Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design. Design of Useful Objects: Daniel S. Defenbacher, Director, Walker Art Center; Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., Research Associate and Consultant on Industrial Design, Museum of Modern Art; and Emily Hall Tremaine, Director of Design, The Miller Company, Meriden, Conn.

All manuscripts, which should be between 2,000 and 3,000 words with accompanying photographs adequate for illustration, must be received at the offices of the *Magazine of Art*, 22 East 60th Street, New York 22, N.Y., no later than Feb. 1, 1951. Winners will be announced in the May issue. Manuscripts will be returned if accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes.

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OFFERS GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

Three annual student fellowships of \$4,000 each are being offered by the trustees of The Metropolitan Museum of Art to qualified graduate students enrolled in the Fine Arts departments of universities in the United States. Established to encourage greater use of the facilities of the Museum, each fellowship will involve twelve months of intensive study in one or more departments of the Museum covering some particular period of art history, a special field of art or a phase of museum work.

The fellowship student will receive \$250 a month, and upon the successful completion of the year's study, he will be eligible for an additional grant of \$1,000 to cover a minimum of two months of travel abroad in further investigation of his chosen subject.

Fellowships are open to men and women. To be eligible, the student must have completed two full years of graduate work by June, 1951, in the history of art, archaeology, or museum training at a recognized American college or uni-

versity and be able to furnish proof of exceptional ability and promise. Applicants must have an adequate reading knowledge of French and German and any specialized linguistic facilities called for by their specific research projects.

The fellowships will run from July 1, 1951 to July 1, 1952. Applications should be made not later than Feb. 15, 1951. Announcement of appointments will be made on or before April 15, 1951.

Further information and application forms are available through the Dean or Chairman of the Art Department in the applicant's graduate school, or through the Dean of Education and Extension at the Museum.

NEW AWARD FOR ARCHITECTURAL WRITING OFFERED

The Architectural League of New York has announced the establishment of the Howard Myers Memorial Award in memory of the outstanding service rendered by the late Howard Myers, for 22 years the publisher and editor of the *Architectural Forum*.

Under the leadership of Wallace K. Harrison, Director of Planning for the United Nations Headquarters, a fund has been established for the purpose of making cash awards of \$500 each from time to time for the best written, most progressive and most influential writing in the field of architecture.

The Committee on Scholarships and Special Awards of the League will administer the Myers Memorial Award with the advice of Douglas Haskell, Architectural Editor, *Building*; Harold Hauf, Editor-in-Chief, *Architectural Record*; and Charles Magruder, Managing Editor, *Progressive Architecture*.

LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY GALLER EXHIBITS

The Louisiana Landmarks Society, a chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians, and the City of New Orleans presented an exhibition of the works of James Gallier, architect, in commemora-

tion of the Centennial of the City Hall, from Nov. 10 to Nov. 19, 1950. The catalogue, with an introduction by Marion Dean Ross, Eugene, Ore., lists the 94 works of James Gallier included in this exhibit. On Nov. 15, John Canaday lectured on the works of James Gallier in the Jackson Room of the St. Charles Hotel. Mr. Samuel Wilson, Jr., president of the Louisiana Landmarks Society, reports that the exhibition was very favorably received.

WOMAN'S PLACEMENT BUREAU

"The Bureau has been established by a group of women's colleges, with the co-operation and assistance of business firms and public welfare organizations, to service business, to serve college and professional women, and to serve the colleges.

"For employers the Bureau offers a central organization through which the services of qualified women can be obtained without obligation to either the employer or employee. For the college and professional women it offers a wide and impartial selection of job opportunities without any charge either for registration or placement. For the colleges the Bureau is a logical extension of their efforts to train and assist their graduates for a useful life.

"Since the Bureau relies on contributions from those it serves for its operating funds instead of on income from placement fees, it is in a position to render outstanding service and is able to devote its wholehearted efforts to finding the right person for difficult or unusual positions. . . ."

Woman's Placement Bureau, Inc., with Alice Gore King as Executive Director, is located at 541 Madison Ave., New York 22, N.Y.

EXHIBITIONS AVAILABLE

"Form in Handwrought Silver," an exhibition showing the use of silver as an art medium, is now touring museums in the United States under the auspices of The American Federation of Arts. The exhibition, which includes graphic ma-

terial, photographs and unique pieces of contemporary silver, has been prepared by Handy and Harman as part of a non-profit educational program administered by their Craft Service Department. Also, the handwrought silver designed and executed by art teachers who attended the 1950 national Silversmithing Workshop Conference, sponsored by Handy and Harman, is being exhibited in the communities where the conferees are teaching.

The Kansas State Federation of Art has listed their circulating exhibitions now available for booking in their Bulletin No. 44, dated Oct. 15, 1950. Write to John F. Helm, Jr., Director of the Kansas State Federation of Art, Kansas State College, Manhattan, Kansas, for copies of this bulletin.

The National Audubon Society is offering "Audubon Art Tours" to local sponsors throughout the country for exhibition in places of public patronage, such as museums, libraries, etc. Artists represented include bird-painters Allan Brooks, Luis Agassiz Fuertes, R. Bruck Horsfall, Athos Menaboni, Roger Tory Peterson, George Miksch Sutton and others. All of these originals are framed, insured by the Society under an all coverage policy and packed in specially-built shipping cases. "Audubon Art Tours" are available on a contribution basis. For further details, write the National Audubon Society, One Thousand Fifth Ave., New York City.

George Binet Gallery, 67 East 57th St., New York 22, N.Y., has prepared the following new loan exhibitions: "Contemporary American Color Lithographs," "Modern American Color Woodcuts," "Modern American Color Etchings and other Intaglio Prints," "French and American Color Prints" (all media), "Religious Prints" (from Durer to Rouault), "Oils and gouaches by Mane-Katz," "The Amish Folk"—Oils, drawings, etchings by Kiehl and Christian Newswanger, "Quebec-Maine-Mexico"—gouaches by Myrwyn Eaton, and "Oils and Woodcuts by R. R.

Tacke." These are in addition to the modern French prints, listed in Loan Exhibitions Catalogue No. II, and etchings and engravings, listed in Loan Exhibitions Catalogue No. 1.

Esther Gentle, 51 Grove St., New York 14, N.Y., has prepared for rental exhibitions to colleges, art galleries and libraries 31 fine, hand-made reproductions of modern art, including works of Picasso Klee, Matisse, Moore Rattner, Feininger, Braque, Lautrec, Miro. Literature will be sent on request.

SUMMER SCHOOLS

British Universities: The University of Birmingham at Stratford-on-Avon, the University of London, and Edinburgh University have planned special courses for summer school students from the United States and other countries. Intended primarily for graduate students, teachers, librarians and others, the courses will also be open to undergraduate students in their senior year. Each course will last six weeks, beginning late June or early July. Inquiries should be addressed either to British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N.Y. or to the Institute of International Education, 2 West 45th St., New York, N.Y. Application blanks are now available and must be completed and returned by March 18, 1951.

The American University: Intensive courses in archives administration, the preservation and interpretation of historic sites and buildings and genealogical research will be offered beginning June 11, 1951. Organizations cooperating in one or more of the courses include the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Service, the National Park Service, the Maryland Hall of Records, and Colonial Williamsburg, Inc. Further information may be obtained from the Office of the Director, School of Social Sciences and Public Affairs, The American University, 1901 F Street, Northwest, Washington 6, D.C.

Mexico: Escuela Interamericana de Verano at Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico, will

begin its summer quarter July 2, 1951 and run until Aug. 10, 1951. Courses are being offered in the field of Mexican culture and civilization. For bulletins, write to Donald M. Custer, Box 413, Salida, Colorado.

FILM LIST PUBLISHED

The International Film Bureau, 6 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 2, Ill., has published a list of art films available for purchase or rental and will send copies of this list free on request. Films in the fields of fine art, architecture, art education, and crafts are listed, with a brief description and running time of each. All films are 16 mm. sound.

POSTER CONTEST

The 26th annual Latham Foundation International Humane Poster Contest closes March 1, 1951. Cash prizes will be awarded winning contestants, and 23 scholarships in art schools will be given. For rules of the contest and classifications of entries, write to John de Lemon, Art Director of the Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education, Box 1322, Stanford, California.

DIRECTORY OF AMERICAN SCHOLARS

This important publication is again being undertaken by The Science Press. Many of the questionnaires are now in the mail requesting information about scholars in various fields including the fine arts. The Science Press, through the cooperation of the American Council of Learned Societies, hopes to produce an excellent directory of about 25,000 persons in the various fields included in the directory. It is hoped that those who have received their questionnaire will return it as promptly as possible so that the work may be completed, and the directory published by September 1951.

The purpose of the *Directory of American Scholars* is practical rather than honorific, and to that end has expanded its coverage to roughly twice the number

of biographies contained in the first edition. To attain that goal, The Science Press will require the prompt cooperation of those who receive biographical questionnaires.

MIDWESTERN COLLEGE ART CONFERENCE 1950

The Conference met at the University of Louisville, under the auspices of the University's Allen R. Hite Art Institute, October 26-28, 1950. James Johnson Sweeney delivered an opening lecture, "American Painting, 1950." After greetings from the President of the University, the afternoon sessions were held. These were (a) On College Architecture, with address by Walter Creese (University of Louisville) discussed by a panel including David Durst (University of Arkansas), Winston Elting, architect, Thomas M. Folds (Northwestern) and Edward Rannells (University of Kentucky), and (b) The Teaching of Drawing, moderated by Robert Motherwell and discussed by Karl Richards (Bowling Green), Hubert Ropp (Art Institute of Chicago), Ralston Thompson (Wittenberg), and Ulfert Wilke (University of Louisville). An evening of art movies was held at the Louisville Free Public Library.

Friday morning a series of papers on contemporary art was read, with Lester Longman (State University of Iowa) presiding. They were as follows: "A Cultural Evaluation of Subjectivism in Contemporary Art" by Paul Laporte (Macalester College), "Max Beckmann: Iconography of the Triptychs" by Clifford Amyx (University of Kentucky), "Walt Kuhn" by Phillip Adams (Cincinnati Art Museum), and "The New York School" by Mr. Motherwell.

Two sessions on Friday afternoon were devoted to (a) New Painting Media, moderated by Byron Burford (Iowa), and discussed by Raymond Barnhart (Kentucky), Frederick Conway (Washington University), Mr. Motherwell, Raymond

Parker (University of Minnesota), and John Teyral (Cleveland Institute of Art), and (b) The Teaching of Sculpture, moderated by Justus Bier (Louisville), and discussed by Erwin Frey (Ohio State University), Romauld Kraus (Louisville), Robert Laurent (Indiana University), Marvin Martin (University of Illinois), David Rubins (John Herron Art Institute), David Smith, and Hugo Weber (Institute of Design).

After the banquet Friday evening George Rickey (Indiana) moderated a discussion of Art in the Small College by the following: Vernon Bobbitt (Albion), Margaret Kerfoot (Hamline), Horace King (Denison), Stefan Hirsch (Bard), Marjorie Logan (Milwaukee-Downer), and Elizabeth Watts (Lindenwood).

Saturday morning at the annual business meeting, presided over by President Harvard Arnason (Minnesota), the following officers were elected: Justus Bier (Louisville), as President, Alden Megrew (University of Colorado) Vice-President, and Eleanor Lindstrom (Colorado), secretary. The 1951 meeting will be in Boulder and Denver at the beginning of November. The Conference voted to establish a non-periodical Newsletter; the first issue will consist of a report of the findings of this Conference. Creighton Gilbert (Louisville) was appointed editor by Mr. Arnason.

The following exhibitions were arranged in Louisville in honor of the Conference: at the Art Center Association, a faculty show and open house in teaching studios; at the Junior Art Gallery, a special exhibition of the Art of the Shakers, sponsored by the University; at the Speed Art Museum, drawings by members of the Conference and sculpture by members of the panel on sculpture; at the University, prints "From Dürer to Chagall," a first exhibition of the University's print holdings.

CREIGHTON GILBERT
University of Louisville

book reviews

OSVALD SIRÉN, *Gardens of China*, xiv + 144 pp., 219 pl. (11 in color), New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1949. \$30.00.

OSVALD SIRÉN, *China and Gardens of Europe of the Eighteenth Century*, xiv + 228 pp., 208 pl. (16 in color), New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1950. \$30.00.

The reasons for Sirén's success as an interpreter of Chinese art have never been more attractively demonstrated than in these twin volumes. The reader's eye will trace out the most obvious at once: an ability to find and work with an expert and conscientious publisher. The two garden books share an extremely handsome format, unlike that of his earlier sets but quite as distinguished. More than any published predecessor, again, they exhibit the author's prowess as a photographer. The illustrations so generously provided, in quantity and at large size, are superior throughout, and in many cases are astonishingly beautiful. The text has Sirén's habitual virtues, clarity, good sense, a kind of pervading friendliness toward his subject and reader both. His writing as always bespeaks a long and profitable experience; here, perhaps because of a special sympathy for gardens, it is often quickened by a contagious emotion. All of this makes for popularization at a level rarely achieved. Only Grousset has equal competence in the field of *haute vulgarisation*, and his books must persuade without the asset of visual attractiveness.

The similarities between the two

studies are offset by fundamental differences. It should be noticed at the start that the European volume is somewhat misleadingly titled. Its field is not Europe, but England, France, and Sweden; Sirén explains that post-war conditions prevented his completing the account by visits to Germany and Austria. Its subject is more a general history of romantic garden design than a detailed study of Chinese influences (like Eleanor Von Erdberg's monograph on garden architecture). This is particularly true in the English section, which lingers over a half century—after Sir William Temple's premature discovery of "sharawadgi"—when the Chinese current was a barely perceptible trickle. It is less obvious in the other two chapters; not so much, one would say, by the author's choice as from the historical accident that the romantic garden won popularity in France and Sweden only at a fairly late date when the "Anglo-Chinese" mode was at its height. Sirén's method here is chronological, and draws with advantage from both contemporary descriptions and his own impressions as a visitor. His bibliography is long and studded with original sources; the standard of accuracy it represents has been cannily reinforced by contact with such bastions of authority as Pevsner and Wittkower. It is all pleasant and interesting to read in the leisurely tempo at which it must have been written. From the standpoint of information, the chief novelty for a non-Scandinavian reader will probably lie in the chapter on Sweden, where the romantic ideal seems to have been spiced by a dash of provincial innocence.

The Chinese volume by the conspicuous shortness of its bibliography illustrates a still formidable barrier to research in Far Eastern fields: the double difficulty of language and inaccessible sources. There must be an enormous mass of writing in Chinese about the art of garden-making, as there is about

every other aspect of good living. To trace it down and make sense of it would be the painful and perhaps not very rewarding labor of years. Sirén has done as much as one could reasonably expect by drawing his account of the early history of the art from a single published article, translated from the notes of a Chinese expert; and by giving as much prominence as possible thereafter to a series of excerpts from a standard gardening manual of the early 17th century, the *Yüan Yeh*. In this volume his sequence is first analytical—a careful presentation of the factors that make up a typical Chinese garden, its relation to actual Nature, and the elements of which it is composed, rocks, water, trees, architectural forms—and then proceeds to a description of the famous examples still visible today (or at least in the 1920's). These last are for the most part chosen from the two best-known garden sites, Peking and Soochow, and are of fairly recent date (though the claim is often made that the Ch'ing design followed a still visible Ming outline). For information on a somewhat more remote period, Sirén has supplied a chapter on the 14th to 16th centuries garden style around Kyôto in Japan, behind which a Chinese source may be clearly imagined. His European and Chinese material is thus roughly contemporary; a fact that illuminates the fundamental differences between the two. The Chinese designs have the authority of a very old tradition. The signs of their lateness may be apparent to an experienced eye; they reveal nowhere a confusion and loss of confidence like that of the West. The cult of Nature that supports them had been a part of the Chinese way of life for millennia; in the light of its ancient, imperturbable wisdom, the romantic enthusiasm of Europe is like a game played for a while by children tired of something else. Beneath the common, picturesque charms of trees, rocks, and water, the aesthetic distance that lies between a garden of even Ch'ien-lung's

time and a contemporary creation like Kew or Bagatelle is as great as that which separates the Peking palace buildings from—let us say—Fonthill Abbey. All the remembered pleasure that animates Sirén's writing about the European art cannot quite conceal his recognition of its secondary status. It is the Chinese garden that he truly admires, that he has studied with a more constant devotion, and whose beauties he has interpreted with a greater persuasiveness.

In the garden volumes as in his earlier writing, Sirén's virtues are chiefly expository and descriptive. Stylistic comparisons are scantied, little being done, for example, to distinguish the Japanese adaptation from its original. Striking observations or fresh conclusions are almost non-existent, in spite of the opportunities offered. These deficiencies the reader accustomed to more intellectually vivacious authors will discover for himself. More serious is an old failing perceptible to only a few specialists: Sirén's erratic performance as a translator of Chinese. The *Yüan Yeh*, from which almost all his lengthy quotations are drawn, is an abnormally difficult text. By his own admission, therefore, his English version is "in several places only tentative. It is presented as an attempt at interpretation rather than as a literary translation." This is a fair disclaimer, and might properly have been followed by a frank paraphrase. Instead there are all the paraphernalia of a proper translation, quotation marks, a change of type, word-for-word correspondences; and through all this the English wavers back and forth around the axis of Chinese sense as loosely as a serpentine path by Capability Brown improving an old avenue. Translation from the Chinese, like another perilous experiment, is not by any to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God. Sirén's trouble is not so much that he knows too little Chinese (who knows enough?), but

that where too much care can hardly be taken he is careless.

One instance will show the extent to which his "attempt at interpretation" can mislead. The *Yüan Yeh* in a chapter on the selection of garden rocks characterizes the favorite type, the fantastically eroded, pot-holed Tai-hu rock, in a sentence of four characters. Sirén's version (p. 25) is: "They are solid and shiny." Everything about this is wrong. The simplicity of the statement, it is true, is deceptive. There are two adjectives, and a Chinese adjective dealing with other than primary qualities may be the hardest part of speech to render with precision. To choose from among the half dozen or more very loosely related English equivalents given in a standard dictionary, one must certainly recognize what attributes the thing so qualified may properly possess. In the case of vague qualifiers involving an aesthetic judgment, it may be necessary in addition to attempt to penetrate the mind of the Chinese writer, to reconstruct his value decision in terms of the critical standards of his time, or even of his own taste. Here, though the problem is not so acute, Sirén's attempt has failed even the first barrier. Whatever else a Tai-hu rock may be, it is not "solid and shiny." In addition his translation has overlooked a first character, the presence of which shifts to a different "frame of reference" the meanings permissible to the two adjectives; and he has barely recognized the third, which though a mere conjunction contains an important clue. Actually it is the second adjective that is most troublesome, since its shades of meaning (including "shiny") are confusingly diverse. The fundamental sense, stressed by a "water" radical, is the refreshing and fructifying effect of rain. The term may often characterize a painter's brushwork, in conjunction with other adjectives like "harmonious" or "charming." In various uses its connotation moves from one sort of pleasurable reaction to another, so that no single English

equivalent is possible. Here something like "gracious" is perhaps as close as one can come.

What, then, of the Tai-hu rock? Answer (given in the fear of God): *its nature is sturdy and yet gracious.*

ALEXANDER SOPER
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MANUEL BARKAN AND CORETTA MITCHELL, *Art Belongs to All Children*, 15 pp., 34-frame film strip, 3 phonograph records, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1950. \$25.00.

In spite of the numerous speeches at teachers' conventions and the distribution of many good publications in art education, actual practice in the elementary schools continues overwhelmingly to emphasize a type of art work that bears little relationship to the needs of growing boys and girls. For many teachers, parents, and administrators, art is still a matter of copying, tracing, learning correct proportions, and acquiring technical skills. Art in the schools continues to be regarded as a subject of value only to the few who are artistically gifted.

Teachers concerned with the improvement of existing conditions in art education will welcome the appearance of *Art Belongs to All Children*. Here is a well-considered communication which does not rely upon the printed or spoken word alone. Barkan and Mitchell's publication consists of a 34-frame full-color film strip and three twelve-inch phonograph records. When played with a showing of the film strip the records give a synchronized presentation of children's art experience as it is related to their normal growth and development. For durability and practicality the records are made of unbreakable vinylite and can be played on ordinary 78 R.P.M. equipment.

The film strip presents a series of carefully selected photographs of the art of children together with pictures of informal groups of children at work and play. With the help of the accompany-

ing manual, teachers will find the material easy to use. The entire presentation takes twenty-five minutes and in that time the authors clearly and dramatically introduce a number of significant ideas on art education. No attempt has been made to deal with the problems of technique and evaluation. Instead, attention is given to the way children use art media to express individual ideas and feelings and how such expression is an integral and necessary part of their total growth and development. Material is presented, orally and visually, which will help teachers to gain a better understanding of why children distort reality, omit important details, give various interpretations to the same subject, and explore and manipulate art media. Most important is their emphasis upon the fact that creative art has meaning in the development of *all* children, not a select few.

With the exception of a few of the frames depicting the crafts, the photography and color are excellent. The intelligently prepared script is narrated by a voice that is clear and pleasant to listen to. All productions of this type encounter some difficulty in satisfactorily coordinating ideas given verbally with those that appear on the screen. For the most part the authors have solved this problem successfully, but there are a few occasions where the audience expects a closer relationship than is actually possible with the illustrations selected. This same lack of kinship occurs in one or two portions where the speech becomes so dramatic and forceful that the pictures seem to be superfluous and even distracting. One may also question a tendency to "read" more content and art quality into children's expression than actually exists or was intended by the artist.

The authors speak of a broad (all-inclusive) definition of art in the elementary school, but the developmental stages in three-dimensional material are not as adequately demonstrated as they are in drawing and painting.

However, none of this prevents *Art Belongs to All Children* from fulfilling a genuine need in education. If widely used it promises to promote a better understanding of the place of art in the public schools. It should prove of great value in the in-service training programs for elementary classroom teachers. In teacher education classes at the college level it may form the basis for further study on the teaching of art. Superintendents and principals will find it of particular worth in presenting an educationally sound point of view to the parents and laymen in the community.

It is unfortunate that the initial cost may prevent *Art Belongs to All Children* from reaching the very teachers and schools that need it most. The right kind of art education is almost totally lacking in country schools and small school systems, and these are the very schools least likely to have available funds for audio-visual aids. Although such schools can take advantage of materials available on a rental basis, it is the policy of many audio-visual distribution centers not to include film strips in their lists.

There is no question that this publication is one of the most important audio-visual resources in art education yet produced. By means of it teachers can obtain an understanding and appreciation of the real meaning of art in the school. Having arrived at this understanding it can be expected that teachers will then ask, "How do you teach art?" This is the next step—and many will look for the answer from the authors of *Art Belongs to All Children*.

HAROLD A. SCHULTZ
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FREDERICK ANTAL, *Florentine Painting and its Social Background—The Bourgeois Republic before Cosimo de' Medici's Advent to Power: XIV and early XV Centuries*, xxiv + 388 pp., 160 pl., London: Kegan Paul, 1948. £4.4 s.

The title of this book should be: The

Social Background of Florentine Painting. Read as a textbook on the political, social and economic history of the Florentine Republic it is a mine of information, although it does not, and can hardly be expected to, contain any material unfamiliar to the reader of Davidsohn, Doren and other classics of this well explored field. There is no doubt that a sound knowledge of the circumstances under which art of a given period is produced can be useful to the student of that art. But it is in the nature of circumstances that they do not produce anything, least of all art.

The method employed in this book is not new. Long before Comte's positivism and the theory of milieu developed by Taine under Comte's influence, the connections between the art of a period and its social, religious, political and economic conditions were studied. Among Comte's contemporaries the Goncourts are in everybody's mind, but the most monumental attempt in this direction was made by Karl Schnaase's *Geschichte der Bildenden Künste*. Writing about the middle of the 19th century, at a time when Late Romanticism gradually gave way to Mid-Victorian Realism, Schnaase added to each of the many volumes of his work a long well written chapter dealing with the cultural history of the period. As in so many other books up to the present day, on the whole it was left to the reader to establish a satisfactory relation between these last and the preceding chapters. Were the pyramids the expression of the pharaoh's omnipotence or were they, like the pharaoh himself, the symbol of deeper and darker forces of which even Egyptian religion was only a confused reflection? One receives no clear-cut answer to these questions, but Schnaase seems inclined to see the relation between Society and Art less in terms of cause and effect than of parallel manifestations growing from a common though mysterious root.

Dr. Antal's book has the virtue of taking a clear stand with regard to this

problem. There is no doubt in his mind that the great change which takes place in Florentine art between the early 14th and the first third of the 15th century is not only closely related to the fundamental changes in "economic, social and political ideas" caused by the emergence of an upper middle class during the same period, but that this change of ideas is the immediate cause of the change in the field of art. Had the author merely intended to demonstrate the parallel development of an upper middle class and of a new style he could have saved himself the trouble of writing this book: that would have been a platitude one can find in every popular textbook. The platitude would immediately cease to be one if a serious attempt were ever made to show the exact nature of this parallelism. The mere appearance in works of art of subject matter from the bourgeois scene does not suffice to create a new style. The methodological difficulty in dealing with such a situation does not lie on the side of art history which has developed the methods for defining a style, but in the lack of a comparable terminology in the fields of sociology and political history that could penetrate beyond the material to the driving forces behind it. To introduce into the study of history patterns of evolution (which are sometimes even claimed to be "historical laws," i.e. to determine the unpredictable course of individual historic events) is no substitute for such a terminology because the nature of these driving forces is not evolutionary but *essential* like a style, in the deeper sense of the term, in art. If there is any unity in the various cultural manifestations of a period these driving forces must be the same in the economic and political field as those which account for the existence of style in the field of art.

Wisely avoiding the dangers of this vast problem, Dr. Antal deals only with the more limited question of the cause and effect relation between the political social and economic outlook of the new

class or classes and the art of the period. This question is more limited because admittedly it considers only the new subject matter. Subject matter more or less modifies the outward appearance and sentimental atmosphere of a work of art while (and therein lies its limitation) it has little effect upon the style which follows its own immanent evolution just as do the social and political ideas of a period. To bring these together with style the more profound method just indicated of finding a common denominator would have to be employed.

One can fully agree with the author "that the subject matter of a work of art is of no less importance than its formal elements" (p 4). But we begin to hesitate when he goes on to say: "Considering each style as a specific combination of the elements of subject and form, the thematic elements offer an immediate transition to the general outlook on life, the philosophy, from which the pictures in question derive." "A specific combination of the elements of subject and form" seems to be a rather crude over-simplification of the very complex process that transforms "subject" into "form" in a work of art. And while "the general outlook on life" as indicated by the work of art is useful material to the historian, it is hardly the final goal of art history and it is certainly not identical with "the philosophy from which the pictures in question derive" unless the word "philosophy" is unduly diluted. It is, as we are told later, the "philosophy" of the classes, mainly of the upper middle class, "from which [these] pictures derive." The author continues: "Works of art considered thus are no longer isolated; we have penetrated beyond the formal and are touching upon something deeper, upon the conception of life." Penetrated beyond the formal and touching upon something deeper! What we had only suspected before is now proved to have been a valid suspicion: form is an unavoidable convention to

Dr. Antal, something beyond which we can penetrate to something deeper, the conception of life of the upper middle class. But is form really a mere pattern without meaning? Does it not invade and transform all layers of the work of art raising them to an abstract significance all its own? While we agree with Dr. Antal in condemning *L'Art pour l'Art* theories, this turning of the tables on form in favour of subject matter (even if such a distinction could be made once subject matter has been absorbed) seems to be the opposite extreme.

To the social, political and economic ideas which cause the change of style, Dr. Antal adds religious sentiment. The appearance during the period of new iconographic types in devotional art has, of course, always been observed. In order to subordinate this material to the leading ideas religious sentiment had to be differentiated according to social groups.

It appears, then, that the taste of large groups more than any other factor determines the course which art shall take. In other words this is a history of Florentine painting seen from the viewpoint of the patrons. The artist is not left out entirely: he too is considered as a social being, of inferior rank in the 14th and improving in social status in the 15th century. The pattern is familiar: one of Vasari's guiding ideas was the contrast between the medieval craftsman and the lordly artist of his day. A first step in this direction may have been made in Ghiberti's lifetime. But can one trust the documents, on which such argumentation is based? There is nothing so misleading as an historical fact. The social status of artists was laid down in the constitutions of the guilds; but did those constitutions reflect the position the artists held in the public opinion of their contemporaries? Arnolfo di Cambio, Giotto, Orcagna are appreciated as extraordinary men in contemporary records. Contracts in which every detail of the work to be done is laid

down seem to prove that the artist was merely executing his patron's wishes. But until we know what negotiations preceded the drawing-up of a contract, such documents should be mistrusted. Michelangelo's contracts for the tomb of Julius contain just such detailed descriptions, yet nobody would have dared to interfere with his plans. In short, "the artist as a social being" is only a very small portion of the artist and the preeminent influence of the classes on the development of art cannot account for one quality found in men like Giotto and Masaccio: genius.

In a book of this kind a clear statement of method will, of course, be more important than the material offered in proof of the thesis and it is for this reason that we have dwelt so long on the flaws in its theoretical foundation. In detail there is naturally a tendency to describe as productions of the young capitalistic order phenomena which have a much older history. I choose at random the interpretation given to the choir chapels of S. Croce (p. 128). The planning is not new, as the Franciscans took it over from the Cistercians of the 12th century. Nor is it a startling novelty to find these chapels endowed by wealthy families. Paris under the reign of St. Louis can hardly be described as the seat of a capitalistic society. Yet as early as 1243 in Notre Dame the walls of the aisles had to be moved outwards to give room for new chapels to be endowed by wealthy families. Neither can the influence of mystery plays (*rap-presentazioni sacre*) on painting be described as something specifically Florentine, or typical of the late Middle Ages and of a bourgeois society, since the influence of religious drama on art is seen in Provence and many other parts of Europe in the 12th and earlier centuries.

The author has devoted much space to the distinction between "progressive" circles which patronized progressive art, and the more old-fashioned members of a socially lower order who favoured a

more popular, often hieratic art. This theory is too simple. Can we explain the art of Andrea Orcagna as an instance of a compromise between the upper class and popular movements (p. 193)? It is first of all difficult to understand the role of the artist in this political coalition. Did he simply obey the orders of his patrons or were they so fortunate as to find the exact type of moderate reactionary they were looking for? This whole analysis of Orcagna seems to overlook the fact that far from being a reactionary he moves the development of the figure within space forwards, away from Giotto in the direction of Masaccio, though by way of a detour. It is true that the apparent spacelessness and lack of volume in his compositions have a superficial similarity to the truly "popular" art of Pacino di Buonaguida, but his artistic intentions are fundamentally different. They are too complex and too personal to be measured with the crude instrument of compliance with patrons' tastes.

The book is well illustrated, it contains many excellent observations based on a sound knowledge of the artistic as well as the historical material, and it is persuasively written.

MARTIN WEINBERGER
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New York University

LEO PLANISCIG, *Lorenzo Ghiberti*, 112 pp., 151 ill., Florence: Del Turco Editore, 1949. 3200 lire (c. \$5.50).

The recent cleaning of the North and East Doors of the Florentine Baptistery, which laid bare the original gilt surfaces and thus restored the full splendor of these monuments, has rendered almost the entire existing literature on Ghiberti obsolescent, at least with respect to the illustrations. Dr. Planiscig's book, the first, and as yet the only study of the artist based on the new state of the Doors, is therefore of particular interest. Its large and well printed half-tone plates, captioned in Italian, French, and English, will be a revelation to all those

who have not had the good fortune to see the originals within the past two years. Forty-three of them are devoted to the North Doors, seventy to the "Gates of Paradise." While the special photographic problem created by the brilliant luster of the gilding has not been fully overcome in all instances, the illustrations as a whole succeed remarkably well in conveying the true quality of Ghiberti's masterpieces. Here, if anywhere, an adequate supply of detailed views is indispensable, and Dr. Planiscig offers a gratifyingly large and well balanced selection (a complete photographic record of both sets of doors, including the frames, would take more than twice the number of plates he had at his disposal).

The Italian text is addressed to the educated layman, rather than to the specialist, so that it may not be entirely fair to the author to look for startling new conclusions. Still, this reviewer cannot but confess to a slight sense of disappointment that Dr. Planiscig, whose eminence as an authority in the field of Italian Renaissance sculpture is of long standing, should have confined himself so completely to the presentation of familiar views and materials. His interpretation of Ghiberti's career, supplemented by notes on the individual works and by a four-page bibliography, forms an excellent summary of the current state of our knowledge, but does not augment or deepen it to any extent. One regrets in particular that the author has not made more of an effort to exploit the visual data brought to light by the cleaning of the Doors. Among the reliefs of the North Doors, it is true, he establishes a rough chronological sequence on grounds of style, but his account of the "Gates of Paradise" depends entirely on the documents, even though a full interpretation of the visual evidence is especially important in this case. According to Dr. Planiscig, there can be no doubt that the original distribution of the narrative subjects over twenty panels persisted as late as 1436, when ten of

these had already been cast. Within a year or two after this date, Ghiberti abandoned this arrangement and immediately set to work on the ten large panels that form the present scheme; in 1439, he had finished the wax models for two of them, and three others were in varying stages of completion. The following year, plans were made for the purchase of metal for the casting, and in 1447 the entire set of reliefs was ready to be placed in the door frames. Since it seems reasonable to allow several years for the laborious task of finishing off the surfaces after the casting, Dr. Planiscig concludes that Ghiberti must have created all ten of the reliefs within the brief span of five or six years, i.e., between c.1438 and 1444. Apparently he believes the documentary evidence for this view to be so compelling that he sees no need to match it with corroborative arguments based on style.

However, the wording of the texts involved leaves considerable room for doubt. The crucial notice of 1439 is known to us only in an eighteenth century transcript, and as it contains no explicit mention of wax models it might conceivably refer to the finishing of some of the same bronze panels that had been cast several years before. Offhand, it hardly seems plausible that a master of Ghiberti's slow and methodical habits should suddenly have decided upon a radical change of plan after he had already executed half the number of narrative panels originally called for. What possible reasons could have prompted him to take so unprecedented a step? And why is it that we find no repercussions of the event in the annals of Florentine Quattrocento art? After all, the changeover from the old to the new scheme under these conditions must have been a fairly complicated affair necessitating, among other things, the renegotiation of previous contracts for the project. Clearly, then, Dr. Planiscig's thesis, in order to be acceptable demands further proof drawn from a rigorous analysis of the reliefs them-

selves. How uniform are they in style and conception? Is it actually possible to assign the entire series to the same phase of the master's artistic development, and if so, can we place this phase in the years around 1440? Or are we to assume that Ghiberti did indeed change the scheme of the doors as late as c.1437 but salvaged at least a part of his earlier labors by transplanting certain sections from the discarded reliefs to the new, larger panels? There is also the problem of possible contributions by the master's numerous assistants. For the reliefs of the North Doors, which as a whole exhibit a surprising degree of homogeneity, the question has little importance, but the "Gates of Paradise" contain a good many passages that might well be the handiwork of younger or lesser artists. Even a casual glance at the plates of Dr. Planiscig's book will disclose these variations of style, especially among the background scenes (note the distinct, somewhat primitive character of the details in figs. 81, 89, and 91).

All these problems, needless to say, are far from simple. Still, the cleaning of the doors has brightened the prospect for their eventual solution. Perhaps Dr. Planiscig himself will explore them more fully in future publications.

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CHARLES SEYMOUR, JR., *Masterpieces of Sculpture from the National Gallery of Art*, 184 pp., 141 ill., New York: Coward-McCann Company, 1949. \$9.75.

From its very inception the National Gallery of Art has displayed a keen sense of responsibility to the American public, in making available excellent reproductions of the best objects from its collections in book form, at a price any art lover is happy to pay. *Masterpieces of Sculpture* is in itself a masterpiece. The photographs are so beautiful and have been so splendidly reproduced that it is difficult to see how the job

could have been better done. Indeed it might easily be maintained that these are the best reproductions of sculpture ever published at a reasonable price in this country. At times they are better than the sculptures they reproduce. The filmy translucency of Quattrocento marble, the glitter and the ring of dark Cinquecento bronze, the polish of enamel, the gloss of old gilding, are communicated with astonishing accuracy. The frequent details are sensitively chosen so as to bring out the inner life of each work, not to inflate it or sensationalize it as in the case of certain widely diffused art books of a decade ago. Mr. Seymour has written a fine introduction, weaving the illustrated examples into a kind of history of the Western sculptural tradition, and his notes, with their useful short bibliographies and brief summaries of conflicting opinions are models of lucidity and critical understanding.

Many of the sculptures chosen for reproduction are works of the highest quality, really deserving the title of the book. The splendid English thirteenth century aquamanile, with its brilliant tension of contour and density of mass, is one of the most impressive. The Domenico Malatesta medal by Pisanello demonstrates the surprising dramatic intensity latent in this master's most apparently static works. The superb Sluter-esque gold and enamel morse depicting the Trinity is one of the most powerful reflections of the brief period of Brugundian glory to be found in this country. As an antidote to the ingratiating loveliness of the marbles by Desiderio de Settignano, Agostino di Duccio, Rossellino and Mino da Fiesole comes the implacable, almost Egyptian rigidity of the Alberti medal. I must confess to a special fondness for the Jacopo Sansovino bronze Venus, languorous and already Mannerist. I am also willing to believe it is the statue ordered by Federigo Gonzaga II as the centerpiece for the Sala di Psiche in the Palazzo del Te, "so true and alive," Aretino wrote

to Federigo, "that she fills with desire everyone who looks upon her." And even if the watchwork precision of its metal surface be finally identified as French, the glorious bronze bust of Louis XIV has all the *bravura* of Bernini's conception.

However the occasional shockers amongst the Italian paintings in the National Gallery are not entirely absent from the sculpture department, hiding behind some noble names. Perhaps the worst is the misshapen Madonna attributed to Donatello, a monument to combined vulgarity, insipidity and incompetence. Mr. Seymour's note shows he is well aware of the difficulties attending the original attribution by Bode. But he seems to participate in the general tendency to ascribe inferior terracotta or wood sculptures, if not to the great Florentine artists, at least to a Florentine shop of the same period. In sculpture as in architecture types and motives established in Florence in the 1420's and 1430's were remarkably tenacious in provincial backwaters. The artisan responsible for this piece of church furniture worked late enough to copy into it almost literally the back, the characteristic right arm and clenched fist of the Child in Michelangelo's youthful *Madonna della Scala*; he even utilized the head of Leonardo's St. Anne for the Madonna, forehead band and all, converting the master's exquisite witchery of expression into a gruesome smirk. The plates on pages 62 and 63 prove these points admirably. The earliest known provenance for the statue, Tavernelle, some fifteen miles below Florence on the Via Cassia, might even be the spot where it was manufactured.

The so-called Ghiberti Madonna is of much higher quality, but neither Schlosser nor Planiscig accepted it as Ghiberti and Krautheimer and Pope-Hennessy rightly detect the influence of Quercia. The style certainly recalls a number of wooden polychromed and gilded madonnas from Quercia's following in and around Siena. The gracility

of the line, the surprising turn of cadence, the unreal sweetness, quiver with echoes of familiar Siennese works. The curious glazed terracotta Madonna, which enjoyed a century of residence in Cambridge, is attributed to Michelozzo because he was the only terracotta sculptor of merit (aside from Luca della Robbia), operating in Florence in the first half of the Quattrocento, when Dr. Swarzenski and Mr. Seymour date the work. But there is no evidence to support so early a date. The hanging arm of the sleeping Christ Child, so like the hanging arm of the dead Christ in Michelangelo's first *Pietà*, is an impossible iconographic motive for Florence at this period. Miss Firestone has shown its Venetian origin, and its early appearance in Giovanni Bellini. The relaxed and strongly realistic style, incompatible with the classicistic rigidity and linear compression of Michelozzo, should be dated in the early sixteenth century. The work strongly resembles the Visitation group in Pistoia, which was long attributed to Luca Della Robbia until Procacci demonstrated its Cinquecento date.

When it comes to questions of attribution, a growing American museum whose collections consist entirely of donations occupies an uncomfortable seat. Some consequent fidgeting is evident when in fine print certain works are admitted to be rejected by the most recent and gifted scholars in the field, although not even a question mark in the captions qualifies the ascription to the exalted names of Ghiberti and Donatello. Yet the captions are as far as the general public will ever get. Is this the idea of Ghiberti and Donatello with which they should be presented?

In Mr. Seymour's admirable introduction I should like to take issue with only one statement. While analyzing the two possibly Burgundian medals, he mentions their "Neoplatonic analogies connected with light and love." Considering that the explanatory inscriptions come from the Psalms, St. Luke and

Galatians, I fail to see where Neoplatonism comes in. The figures of church and synagogue were of course adduced by Panofsky as prototypes of Titian's *Sacred and Profane Love*, but that did not affect the textually Christian content. By now the proof reader had had time to regret "Rossellino" on page 21.

All in all, however, the book is magnificent, a real example for the making of art books in this country. Mr. Seymour and the administration of the Nation Gallery are to be congratulated for its excellence, as are Mr. Clarence Kennedy and Mr. Henry B. Beville for the wonderful photographs and the Beck Engraving Company for their flawless reproduction.

FREDERICK HARTT
Washington University

ERWIN O. CHRISTENSEN, *The Index of American Design*, xviii + 229 pp., 378 ill. (115 in color), New York and Washington: Macmillan Co. and National Gallery of Art, 1950. \$15.00.

This attractive book will appeal to the interest in folk art, which has inspired several volumes in recent years, and will serve as a good sampling of the renderings of such objects included in the *Index of American Design*. The inception of the Index in the days of the WPA is described in detail in an extensive introduction by Holger Cahill; it covers also the manner in which the work was organized and, of particular interest, the techniques used in making the renderings chosen for recording in this way. The book reproduces a good selection of these renderings, accompanied by a running text giving information about them or background materials.

The illustrations are of interest also because the original plates in the Index are renderings by hand (reproduced photographically of course in the book), whereas we have been accustomed for some time to find photographs as the basis of the reproductions in books on art. I should not attempt to say to what

extent the multiplication of photographs about us today has established a photographic form as the kind of form to which we refer our perceptions of an object. I think most people will react to these renderings in the Index as very realistic at least; and those who notice the slight difference from photographs may feel that the hand-rendering is in some respects preferable. In the hand renderings the subtle influence of a non-photographic form is present, a form which the object is seen part by part, with each part gaining an emphasis from the interest felt in it. Thus, in addition to ordinary accuracy, there is a certain vividness or tension that adds interest. The difference is most evident in the case of three-dimensional objects, where the hand-rendering can give a more comprehensive image (somewhat abstracted from its surroundings) than the photograph can achieve. Such renderings then lend themselves to photographic reproduction more easily than the original objects (if comprehensive knowledge about the object itself is the end in view). It is therefore highly desirable that the renderings in the Index be made widely available in some kind of reproduction for use in art courses, as in the present book, but also in color-slides for class use. Aside from the problem of continuing the original work of the Index (discussed in the *Journal* recently by Samuel Green), the making of its present material available in good color slides seems to me the best way of extending its usefulness.*

Of course the photographic reproduction of the renderings is a source of possible error, but the illustrations in this book strike me as unusually satisfactory. In the one case in which I can compare the original object (No. 378)

* Mr. Christensen informs me that 2 x 2 Kodachrome slides of items reproduced in this book, made from the original plates in the Index, are available from Dr. Konrad Prothmann, 7 Soper Ave., Baldwin, Long Island, N.Y.

with the illustration in the book as I write, the result, despite departures in detail, eg. the green leaves, and slight variations in hue, is generally very accurate. It is only a pity that the book had to cost so much. Some such book should be kept in print, and I hope another edition can dispense with coated paper for text as well as illustrations, or in other ways reduce the cost. There should be some middle way between the present book and the little volume, also by Mr. Christensen, published by Penguin Books.

J. CARSON WEBSTER
Northwestern University

CARL BRIDENBAUGH, *Peter Harrison: First American Architect*, xviii + 195 pp., 41 ill.: Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949. \$6.50.

"'Cherchez l'homme,' should be the motto of the art historians," Fiske Kimball has written, quoting Lionello Venturi. Except for Kimball himself, the historians of our early building have ignored this precept. Although, during the twentieth century, the study of colonial architecture has been an American obsession, "the Prince of colonial amateurs" had to wait until 1949 before receiving the honor of a full dress biography.

The book was worth waiting for. Bridenbaugh made a careful study of unpublished family papers—both Harrison's and those of his patrons—and uncovered much new material. He uses an unrivalled knowledge of American 18th century city life to interpret these discoveries. Earlier scholars had scraped away the legends and left Peter Harrison little more than a name. Bridenbaugh pieces together the story of a Yorkshire Quaker who progressed from shipbuilder's apprentice to sea captain, who eloped with an American heiress, who settled down in Newport as a prosperous merchant, a gentleman farmer and a pillar of the established church, and who passed his last troubled years as a minor royal official. But the

author does more than chronicle a career; he clearly delineates the man, affable yet reserved, deeply conscientious, dependent from first to last upon the initiative of his older brother.

It was not, be it said, a remarkable career; Peter Harrison was not a remarkable man. He did have an unusual knowledge of contemporary English architecture and he applied that knowledge in the design of American buildings with unique sensitivity. Yet of Harrison's only significant accomplishment, his accomplishment as an architect, there is still much to be learned. He began designing almost as soon as he settled in this country, and he lived here for more than a quarter of a century after his first great work, the Redwood Library in Newport, was started. But Bridenbaugh found only eight buildings to discuss. According to the author, here was a man whose services were in demand from Wolfeborough, New Hampshire to Charleston, South Carolina. Surely, in twenty-five years, he must have created more than four churches, two public buildings, one house and a gazabo.

It is not surprising that a study of the written sources revealed no other works. Colonial documents make but casual references to architects at best. Only a detailed examination of many American eighteenth century buildings, both those which survive and those which have disappeared, could establish the extent of Harrison's work and clarify its place in American colonial architecture. Such an examination is more than one could ask of a social historian like Bridenbaugh. It is eminently a task for a specialist.

Except for this book, that task might never be undertaken. After more than eighty years of impassioned research, after the publication of more than two thousand books and articles, scholarly interest in colonial architecture is beginning to dry up. The major monuments have been measured, the minor ones photographed; architects have continued

to record a profusion of profiles, antiquarians to set down endless anecdotes, until at last a younger generation of art historians has turned from the subject in boredom, unable to discern significant problems in a chaos of trivialities. The great achievement of Bridenbaugh's book is that it made clear one significant problem—what did Peter Harrison accomplish as an architect? It is a case of "Cherchez l'homme" if only to challenge scholarship anew.

JOHN COOLIDGE
Harvard University

AGNES ADDISON GILCHRIST, *William Strickland, Architect and Engineer: 1788-1854*, xviii + 145 pp., 50 pl., Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950. \$10.00.

A definitive study of the life and works of William Strickland, early American architect, has long been in demand. This need has been abundantly fulfilled by the publication of Agnes Addison Gilchrist's *William Strickland, Architect and Engineer: 1788-1854*.

Strickland is perhaps best known as the architect of the former Philadelphia Custom House, originally the Second Bank of the United States, the Philadelphia Exchange, the Tennessee State Capitol and the tower of Independence Hall. But he could as well be identified as the architect of the Chestnut Street and the Arch Street theatres and the United States Naval Home, all in Philadelphia, or of the Branch Mint in New Orleans.

The plan of Mrs. Gilchrist's book is admirable. She first presents a readable three-chapter biography of the architect, uncluttered by the minutia of references or footnotes. This is followed by six appendices which set forth in detail the factual evidence upon which her findings and conclusions are based. Of these, Appendix A, entitled "A Chronologic, Biographic and Descriptive Catalog of the Architectural and Engineering Work of William Strickland from 1804 to 1854," is of greatest value, but the ap-

pendices setting forth the "contents of the Strickland Portfolio of Drawings in the Tennessee State Library," his "Work as an Artist," the "List of Published Writings," the "List of Portraits" of Strickland and his family and "Family, Residences, and Newspaper Obituaries" are highly valuable for the student.

This material is made accessible by a useful index, and photographs and drawings of the architect's works are assembled upon fifty plates placed at the rear of the volume. While the format is highly pleasant, the page size (8½ by 11 inches) makes the volume awkward to shelve with other architectural biographical studies. Moreover, the quality of the illustrations would scarcely seem to demand so ample a plate size. One remembers, of course, that in presenting photographs of buildings no longer standing, one has to do as best he can. To this reviewer, however, the Second Bank of the United States and the Capitol at Nashville are sufficiently important to have merited a more dramatic presentation.

But this aside, the fact remains that Mrs. Gilchrist has marshalled the significant available material upon the architect, his life and his works, and gives us a warm human account which correctly places Strickland in the forefront of the architectural profession of his day. For this she has placed us greatly in her debt. Many questions, such as the relationship between Strickland and Latrobe and the correct authorship of the design for the Second Bank of the United States, are resolved.

Also the architect's social life and his place among contemporary worthies in such learned associations as the Franklin Institute, the Academy of Natural Sciences and the American Philosophical Society, are illuminating. It is heartening to know that he enjoyed membership also in the Beefsteak Club, the Musical Fund Society and the Schuylkill Fishing Club. Strickland's influence upon the budding professionals of his time—Gideon Shryock of Kentucky, Thomas U.

Walter, Samuel Kneass and others—would bear further development. However, we are reminded that Mrs. Gilchrist is still at work upon phases of Strickland's career and is currently editing his "Sketches of Roman Architecture," a series of seven articles which appeared in the *Nashville Orthopolitan* in 1846.

REXFORD NEWCOMB
University of Illinois

REXFORD NEWCOMB, *Architecture of the Old Northwest Territory: A Study of Early Architecture in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Part of Minnesota*, xviii + 176 pp., 96 pl., 49 figs., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950. \$20.00.

The old Northwest Territory, settled after the Revolution chiefly by pioneers from the eastern states (though with later large additions of Germans and Irish), offers a fruitful field for the study of American architecture. The development from wilderness to a land of prosperous farms and gracious towns was accomplished with breath-taking rapidity, and those who settled permanently on these farms and in these towns were apparently determined to make for themselves a culture as advanced as (if less sophisticated than) that of the older seaboard states from which most of them came. In the buildings they built one may often see the influence of their original homes—particularly in the earlier work along the Ohio River, where sometimes the influence of Virginia and Maryland is to be seen, and in the Berkshire and Connecticut types so dominant in the Western Reserve.

Yet the extraordinary thing is that when one looks at the work as a whole (as Rexford Newcomb's beautiful book for the first time permits) one is struck less with the divergence of origins and influences than with the evidence it presents of an over-all harmony. This is perhaps the result of the attempt to take the best and most highly and freely de-

veloped ways of the then current eastern styles—Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic—and apply them to the new problems with a freedom scarcely possible east of the Alleghenies, where traditions and fashions were stronger and where economic conditions and the limitations of space were more stringent. Hence the experimentalism in house form so evident; hence the popularity of extended, one-story plans (like the Swift house at Vermilion or Mount Olive, both in Ohio, or even the Church house in far-off Milwaukee).

Architecture of the Old Northwest Territory offers us all the material necessary to write a history of this really amazing development. Its text gives us the story of the settlement of the area and sketches the backgrounds of the immigrants. It presents a building-by-building account of important monuments, with the dates and a description of each. Its maps show the geographical relationships, and its rich bibliography includes a tremendous amount of source material. Finally, the ninety-six plates of superbly reproduced photographs give a basic visual panorama of surpassing interest. There is also an excellent index.

The materials for the history thus lie before one. But this book does not attempt to write this history; that is left for others. Mr. Newcomb is content to offer us this richness of material; he does little to interpret it. The book therefore leads anyone of a speculative nature into all sorts of fascinating questions—such as those dealing with the "why" of the popularity of the L-shaped house plan, for instance; or, second, where lie the sources or the motives behind the primitively fresh Gothic buildings of Kenyon College; or, third, which early plan books were used where, and how was their influence spread to produce both close followings of their plates and free interpretations? Was this freedom ignorance or was it part of a conscious creative quest for the new and better?

There is one serious lack in this book (a lack all too common in architectural books in this photograph-conscious day): the small number of plans and the relatively small number of interiors. For any true understanding of architecture must depend on the interrelation of plans with exterior and interior effect, and even the purely visual effect is necessarily the result of the enclosure of spaces and of the structural means used to erect the enclosure. Too great a dependence on external effect alone, however beautiful, leads inevitably to a superficial view of architecture and a frequent misunderstanding of style development and change. Is not a similar trend one of the chief criticisms that can be levied against the teaching of architecture in some colleges and graduate departments?

The University of Chicago Press has given this book a lavish and beautiful format—and priced it, alas, at a price that makes it a luxury item for the few and a price that makes necessary an unduly small edition. As a scholar and a teacher I resent this, and I am quite convinced that with only minor changes in size and material and no change in quality the cost might have been cut at least in half.

All students of architecture, nevertheless, are in the greatest debt to Mr. Newcomb; he has here crowned his distinguished career with a beautiful book—the result of wide and careful research and of careful choices from a wealth of material—that must long serve as a source for any serious student of American architecture.

TALBOT HAMLIN
Columbia University

LOUIS H. SULLIVAN, *Democracy: A Man Search*, Introduction by Hugh Morrison, 310 typewritten pp. on six 3 x 5 micro-cards, Louisville: Louisville Free Public Library, 1950. \$7.50.

This work is significant because it marks the first non-profit venture of the Louisville Free Public Library into

micro-card publication and because it makes available to students of American culture an important essay by Louis Sullivan, the great American architect. The essay sprang from Sullivan's deep concern for democracy and the democratic way of life. Like the architecture of the future, democracy to Sullivan seemed bound up with the emancipation of man from primitive prejudices, ignorance, and fear, begotten by Feudalist (undemocratic) forces, which are still active in our society. "The welfare of democracy is my chief concern in life" he wrote in 1904. With his architectural practice at a low ebb during the early years of our century he devoted much of his time to the study of history, philosophy, science and religion in order to search for the meaning of democracy. Like Pugin he felt that we cannot build great buildings until we have remade ourselves spiritually. But the last word meant to Pugin "religiously" while to Sullivan it meant "morally" in the broadest sense of the term.

The analysis of man's shortcoming and Sullivan's faith in him takes the author through a kaleidoscopic survey of political, social, and religious evolution; of the meaning of history; of the distortion of Christianity into the temporal power of the church; of scientific progress and its promise, etc. As Hugh Morrison says in his introduction to this publication, it reads like a prose poem. It is often cast in a language reminiscent of priestly incantation or oracular pronouncement. One regrets that his analysis of the ingredients of democracy and its definition is not as clearly informative as his enthusiasm is fervently and intensely contagious. To paraphrase another commentator on this work, the flowing stream of scintillating sand contains some precious diamonds but there is a good deal of quartz and some plain earth.

As a non-profit venture, and by implication an economical publication, the "micro-carding" of the essay raises a

number of questions. For those who are not familiar with the micro-card and its objectives I wish to describe it briefly. It is a process by which a large number of pages—36 to 58—of printed or typed material are arranged in several rows and reproduced photographically on a 3 x 5 card, thus making possible the publication of Sullivan's essay of 310 pages (plus introduction and foreword) in six cards. Since the cards are perforated like standard library catalogue cards they can be kept in library card trays and can be read by means of a micro-reader. The latter is a machine which magnifies each page separately and reflects it on a glass screen. My first use of the micro-reader in connection with this review was not very comfortable, but I was assured by the librarian that the blurring of the printing was due to the original copy. It seemed as if the typescript were made with a heavily inked ribbon and it gives the effect of a carbon copy. Using Sullivan's own typescript has some sentimental value, but in view of my ex-

perience in reading it I can hardly justify it on practical grounds. The trend in the use of micro-carding process is encouraged by the shrinking spaces of our library stacks and by the proportionately diminishing purchasing funds in the face of the great number of new books, especially costly art books. But while the micro-carding of the essay will save space I am wondering whether its price—in this case without any publisher's profit—is really economical. Adding the price of the "book" to the inconvenient search and use of a micro-reader for reading it, micro-card publications seem to be destined for library acquisition only. Nevertheless we should be grateful to the Louisville Free Public Library for publishing the last of Sullivan's literary works in some form so that all those interested in Sullivan and his search for democracy may read his essay without going to the Chicago Art Institute where the original is kept.

DIMITRI TSELOS

University of Minnesota

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MAX ERNST,
Courtesy Hans Richter.

